



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

November 5, 2015

Aboriginal student results improving, but ministry can do more

VICTORIA - Auditor General of British Columbia Carol Bellringer issued her latest audit today - *Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System*.

Results for Aboriginal students have historically been poor when compared to non-Aboriginal students. In 2000, the provincial graduation rate for Aboriginal students was only 39%, compared to 78% for non-Aboriginal students. By 2014, this improved significantly to 62%, yet there were still school districts where the Aboriginal student graduation rate was less than 50%.

“Ten years ago, the Ministry of Education committed to increasing the Aboriginal student graduation rate to 85% by 2015, an ambitious target to put Aboriginal students on par with their non-Aboriginal peers,” says Bellringer. “But the ministry did not lead the development of a system-wide strategy to achieve their target.”

Bellringer acknowledges the ministry has made improvements and agrees with our recommendations, but says it can do more to increase the number of Aboriginal students who graduate. Through its leadership, the ministry can further support a public school system where school districts have the capacity to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal students, educators expect all Aboriginal students to graduate, and Aboriginal history, language and culture are valued.

“Graduating from secondary school means greater opportunities in life for employment, health and well-being,” said Bellringer.

Among the 11 recommendations in the report, Bellringer recommends the ministry collaborate with boards of education, superintendents, and Aboriginal leaders and communities to create a shared, system-wide strategy to close the gaps in academic and social outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Improving Aboriginal education benefits all students and a better educated population supports economic development throughout the Province.

The report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website www.bcauditor.com. Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a teleconference.



OFFICE OF THE
Auditor General
of British Columbia

Teleconference Date: November 5, 2015

Time: 11:30 a.m. (Pacific Time)

Dial-in Information:

From Vancouver: 604 681-0260

From elsewhere in Canada and the USA: 1 877 353-9184

Participant Pass Code: 32090#

To ask a question during question and answer period: Press 01

To exit the question queue during question and answer period: Press #

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