

Indigenous Student Success Strategy

2022–2023 Report

SASKATCHEWAN
POLYTECHNIC



Saskatchewan Polytechnic serves students through applied learning opportunities on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 Territories and the homeland of the Métis.



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**miyo wâhkôhtowin/
good relationships**



Indigenous Student Success Strategy

Indigenous students are an important part of Saskatchewan Polytechnic's community. The goal of the Indigenous Student Success Strategy 2018–2023 is to increase recruitment, retention, graduation rates and the overall success of Indigenous students across all programs. Each of the strategy's four goals contribute to achieving this.

- ➡ **Nebah ho?á (Denesuline) Welcome:** Ensure Indigenous students attending Sask Polytech are well prepared for post-secondary life and are set up for success.
- ➡ **Ki-kinomawo (Nakawe) Inspire:** Help Indigenous students thrive at Sask Polytech.
- ➡ **Wiyokihya (Dakota) Empower:** Celebrate Indigenous student success and prepare Indigenous graduates for successful careers.
- ➡ **avik wiiyawow (Michif) Belong:** Create inclusive, respectful and welcoming campuses, where Indigenous students have a sense of belonging.

The strategy contributes to Sask Polytech's efforts to meet the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and to live up to its commitments under the Colleges and Institutes Canada's Indigenous Education Protocol.

The strategy, along with other institutional plans and initiatives, such as Innovation in Action: Academic Plan 2020–2025, are based on miyo wâhkôhtowin—good relationships. This Cree phrase expresses the positive value and richness of experience that stems from interconnectedness and relationships. This worldview represents the individual and the community and encompasses the foundation of all we do at Sask Polytech. We honour this principle in every interaction, institutional practice, procedure, policy, and service we provide to learners, faculty, staff, alumni and our communities. We work together to create an inclusive, collaborative and respectful environment in which everyone can grow, thrive and lift each other up.

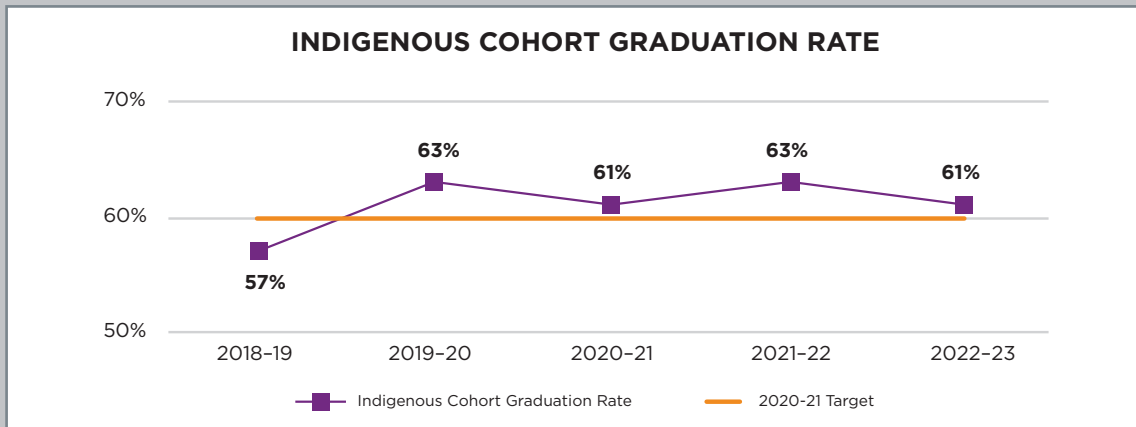
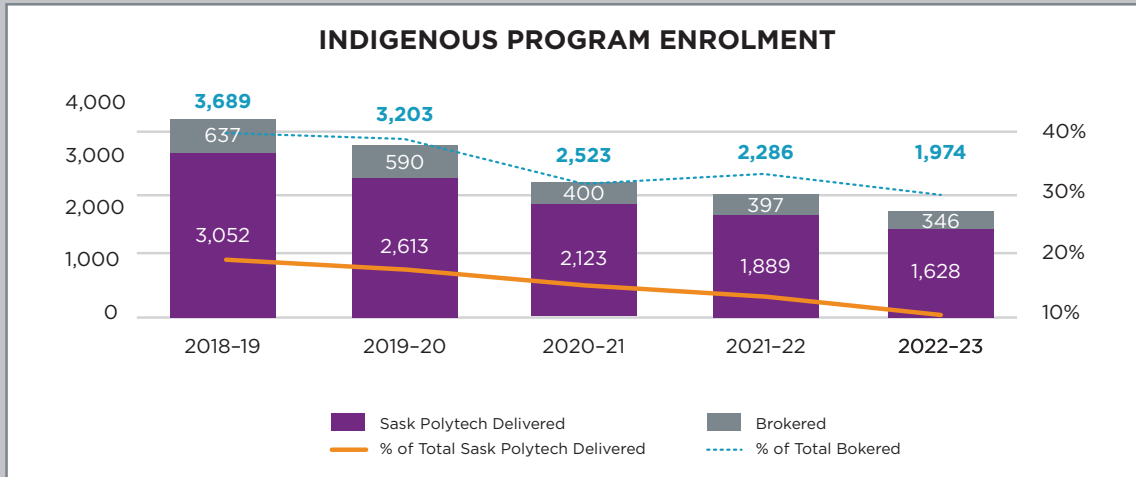
Statistics & balanced report card results



92 per cent of Indigenous graduates find employment



Sask Polytech has 1,974 self-declared Indigenous students* who make up 12 per cent of enrolment.



Note: Indigenous program enrolment includes regional colleges.



Indigenous coordinators had 31,789 student interactions



Indigenous advisors had 46,881 student interactions



Indigenous Community Relations had 21,652 interactions with students/prospective students

Indigenous Student Scholarships & Awards
421 awards valued at **\$455,600**

Indigenous Student Emergency Bursary
203 bursaries valued at **\$151,000**

*This is the number of Indigenous students who have self-declared. The actual number may be higher.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic serves students through applied learning opportunities on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 Territories and the homeland of the Métis. Learning takes place at campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon and through extensive distance education opportunities. Programs serve every economic and public service sector. As a polytechnic, the organization provides the depth of learning appropriate to employer and student need, including certificate, diploma and degree programs, and apprenticeship training. Saskatchewan Polytechnic engages in applied research, drawing on faculty expertise to support innovation by employers, and providing students the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills.

Indigenous Strategy advisory committee

The Indigenous Student Success Strategy advisory committee is a multidisciplinary group of individuals to guide strategy implementation, provide support to the institution's process of indigenization, and consider additional ways to support Indigenous student success. The committee is chaired by the director, Indigenous Strategy and includes representatives from external Indigenous communities, the provost and vice president, Academic, Associate Vice President and Student Services. It also includes key Sask Polytech Indigenous Strategy and other employees, as well as a student representative. Committee members are appointed for a term of either two or three years to allow for planned replacement of committee members. Committee members may serve more than one term.

Committee responsibilities include:

- Act as champions for the Indigenous Student Success Strategy
- Receive regular updates on progress
- Review and provides feedback on recommendations from strategy working committees
- Provide input on issues that arise as part of the strategy's implementation
- Review and provide feedback on recommended initiatives, projects and actions to address barriers to student recruitment and program completion
- Guide prioritization of initiatives, projects and actions



Core functions and services

Indigenous student advisors

Indigenous student success is fostered through dedicated student advisors. Indigenous student advisors cultivate relationships of support to help orient students to Sask Polytech and the community and connect students with outside resources and networks. They help students secure funding, housing, tutorial support, and assist with budgeting and employment information. They also organize study groups and informational, social and cultural events.

Indigenous student advisors work with instructors, program heads and deans to help students achieve academic success in their chosen area of study. Advisors advocate for students if needed.

Advisors share information with faculty Indigenous cultural and academic teachings, and ways of knowing to further the understanding of Indigenous curriculum-building, understanding and miyo wâhkôhtowin—good relationships.

Indigenous students' centres

Indigenous students' centres offer students a safe space to connect with Elders, knowledge keepers and cultural advisors who can provide academic, emotional and spiritual support for Indigenous students. Sask Polytech has an Indigenous students' centre on each campus staffed with Indigenous coordinators and student advisors. In addition to providing a space to study and socialize, with computers and kitchens for use, each centre hosts a variety of cultural activities and events and uses the space to deliver services.

Elder access—One day a week drop in at all centres, special occasions and as needed.

Smudging—Students and employees can stop in at any time if they need to smudge. Ceremonies vary from campus to campus. Prince Albert campus has a weekly smudging ceremony. Regina campus offers guidance if needed every morning.

Soup and bannock—At minimum, monthly at all centres and may happen more often depending on need.

Cree for beginners—Weekly where students and employees can attend in person or join virtually through zoom.

Lunch and learn—At least monthly on various topics, and as needed. For example, there is a weekly lunch and learn on beading on Regina campus.



Projects

Role model calendar—10th year!

Continuing to put students' needs first, the Indigenous Student Success Strategy guides efforts to ensure students can see themselves and their culture reflected throughout the institution. To this end, Indigenous role models are featured throughout institutional publications as an important way for students and prospective students to be inspired to pursue and realize their educational and career goals at Sask Polytech.

Indigenous role model photos, stories and videos are shared in our annual calendar, on our website and on social media. Each success story includes information on their learning journey, program and home community.

Each of the 120 stories are unique and describe how services, such as the Summer Transition Program and Indigenous Students' Centres, help students overcome challenges to achieve success.

Representation of Indigenous role models is important to the success of Indigenous students. Since 2013 Saskatchewan Polytechnic has celebrated and shared these success stories through the annual Indigenous role model calendar. In more recent years, these stories have been shared online and on social media.



10 days of holiday giveaways and holiday hampers

During the 10 days of holiday giveaways, there were several in-person and virtual holiday events. These included tree decorating, bingo, ugly sweater day and an end of the year turkey lunch celebration. More than 1,400 ballots were received for prizes. In all, about 80 prizes, such as holiday gift cards, festive food baskets and treats, were given away.

In December 2022, the Indigenous Strategy team handed out over 200 holiday hampers to Indigenous students across the province. The hampers are designed to provide financial and mental health supports for Indigenous students during what can be a stressful time for many people.



Indigenous students' centres refresh

The four Indigenous student centres on main campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon have been refreshed. They provide welcoming spaces for students to connect with Elders, knowledge keepers, Indigenous advisors and coordinators. They also serve as space to participate in cultural activities and teachings.



Events and celebrations

Indigenous Strategy has lead Sask Polytech's recognition of the following:

- ➡ Orange Shirt Day / National Day for Truth and Reconciliation—all proceeds from the sale of Orange Shirt Day tee shirts go back to the students in the form of bursaries as part of the Campus Bookstore Give Back Collection
- ➡ Louis Riel Day
- ➡ National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Peoples
- ➡ National Indigenous Peoples Day
- ➡ Moose Hide Campaign



Innovation in Action Academic Plan 2021–2026

Innovation in Action Academic Plan 2021–2026 supports the goals of the Indigenous Student Success Strategy to nebah ho?á—welcome, ki-kinomawo—inspire, wiyokihya—empower, and avik wiiyawow—belong. Guided by the Indigenous Declaration and in the spirit of miyo wáhkóhtowin, the academic plan outlines desired outcomes and the commitments Sask Polytech is making to achieve these outcomes through to 2026.

The following highlight select plan commitments:

Enriching the learner experience—Meet learner needs in an individualized, personalized and lifelong way, guided by a fully developed strategic enrolment management plan.

Enhancing programming—Build our curriculum in a way that supports positive relationships with all and an appreciation for diverse perspectives.

Evolving our academic culture—Create a workforce that is reflective of the learner community and society, and develop appreciation of cultural and socio-demographic diversity throughout Sask Polytech.

Embracing community partnerships—Contribute to the progress of reconciliation, working with Indigenous partners and the community.

Indigenous Declaration

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is committed to the indigenization of our institution. Indigenization is our social and collective responsibility and it enriches and benefits all aspects of our institutional culture.



Indigenous Strategy community relations

Indigenous Community Relations

During this academic year, the Indigenous Community Relations team with the Indigenous Strategy team has made many community connections. Our team was able to host an Indigenous student information session and campus tour event on both our Saskatoon and Regina campuses. The events brought in more than 400 Indigenous grade 11 and 12 students from the city school divisions. Students were able to see firsthand the different programs and resources Sask Polytech has to offer Indigenous students.

The Indigenous Community Relations team also hosted an Indigenous Post-Secondary Funders Informational Session on the Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina campuses. Funders were able to learn what programs, resources and initiatives Sask Polytech has to offer Indigenous students from their communities who may be interested in our programs.

Many Indigenous communities within Saskatchewan have travelled to have campus tours with the team. Dozens of high school visits and presentations across the province have been completed this academic year to date.

Honouring miyo wâhkôhtowin powwow

Saskatchewan Polytechnic hosted its first powwow to honour miyo wâhkôhtowin. Powwows are a central aspect of Indigenous culture and provide an opportunity to celebrate traditions, showcase talent and bring people together in a spirit of unity and friendship. Sask Polytech had 150 dancers and 500 attendees. By hosting this powwow, Sask Polytech is demonstrating its commitment to miyo wâhkôhtowin, promoting diversity and inclusivity on its campuses and expressing the positive value and richness of experience that stems from interconnectedness and relationships.

Overall, about 500 people attended, including about 200 dancers, several hand drummers, five drum groups and many singers who competed for prizes. The event was overwhelmingly successful. Thank you to Association of Métis, Non and Status Indians Saskatchewan (AMNSIS) for sponsoring Sask Polytech's first powwow.



Community engagement and outreach

The role of Sask Polytech's Indigenous community liaison is to build community awareness among the Indigenous community, external agencies and businesses about the Indigenous Student Success Strategy as well as Sask Polytech's commitment to Indigenous student success. The work includes developing, maintaining and coordinating relationships and communications with Indigenous organizations that sponsor students to attend Sask Polytech.

An important function is leading the development of Indigenous student recruitment activities plan for Saskatchewan Polytechnic and work with Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Business Development and Advancement division to grow an active Indigenous alumni group.

Indigenous student success coaches

Indigenous student success support coaches are aimed at promoting a positive Indigenous student experience by supporting the Indigenous Student Success Strategy on increasing Indigenous student enrollment and retention. To achieve this, they will prepare perspective Indigenous student for post-secondary by:

- Supporting post-secondary transition programs for Indigenous students based on a clear understanding of education needs
- Being the first point of contact for information and advising future students, counsellors, teachers, parents, external community partners and the public.
- Extending invitations to new students to orientation and other events and the planning, implementation, coordination and evaluation of major recruitment events such as selected high school visits, presentations and workshops, guidance counsellor workshops
- Meeting with high schools and adult basic education programs that have a high population of Indigenous students and making classroom presentations
- Advancing reconciliation

Indigenous Strategy funded applications

The fee to apply for admission to Sask Polytech may be waived for Indigenous students based on need. This is intended to remove the financial barrier to apply for admission to Sask Polytech and increase program participation rates. As of May 11, 2023, 92 applications have been funded.

SGL driving program

Driver training is provided to students enrolled in the Sask Polytech Literacy and Adult Basic Education program in Saskatoon. Academic year to date, 10 students have participated in the program. The program is proving successful for participants and is being expanded to Regina campus.

With funding from SGL.

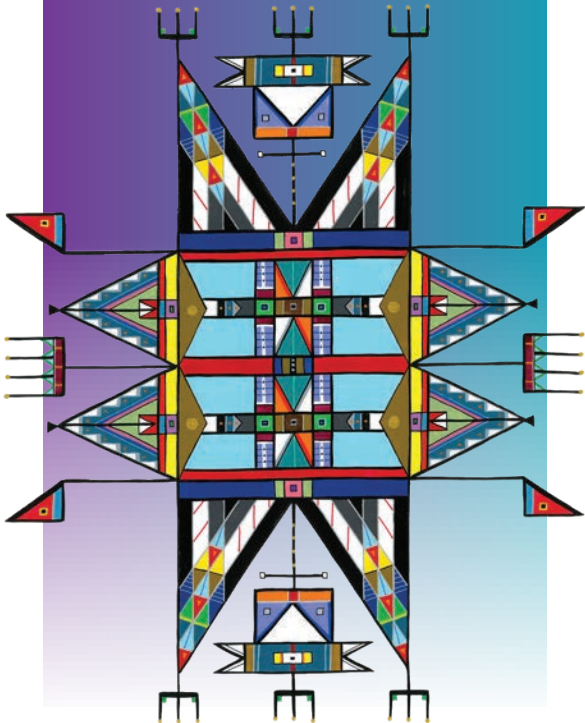
Indigenous activity book

Designed for elementary students ages 9-12, Sask Polytech's Indigenous activity book aims to engage and encourage Indigenous students to achieve their education and career goals with Sask Polytech.

With the Indigenous Activity Book learning about Indigenous culture and language is made fun with a variety of puzzles, mazes, word games and colouring pages.

Indigenous Belief Statement

We indigenize by holistically integrating Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching, and learning within all of the institutional practices, procedures and services we provide to students, staff and communities. This results in Indigenous people seeing themselves and their realities reflected throughout our institution. It also results in non-Indigenous people gaining the skills and knowledge that enable them to work with and live alongside their Indigenous neighbours knowledgeably and respectfully.



Community partnerships and outreach

Sask Polytech has fostered partnerships in support of the goals of the Indigenous Student Success Strategy and to meet the goals of Leading the Rise, Sask Polytech's Strategic Plan 2020-2025. In the spirit of miyo wâhkôhtowin, the Leading the Rise goal of empowering Saskatchewan's communities to lead, thrive and grow is particularly relevant.

Indigenous Outdoor Learning Centre

Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), Saskatchewan Polytechnic and Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation have been collaborating on the encampment near Candle Lake. The Indigenous Outdoor Learning Centre is an extension of the Hannin Creek Education and Applied Research Centre. Four tipis were raised for the new Indigenous Outdoor Learning Centre. The new centre is called mitho askiy kiskēyihitamowin, which is Cree for good learning through experiences on the land. This exciting collaboration focusses on land-based learning and provides cultural awareness training and education about the ways and history of Indigenous people.

Land-based learning is the focus of the new encampment encouraging students and camp participants to learn from the land, live off the land and live in harmony with the land. The PAGC has been an instrumental stakeholder in developing the centre and related programming. Qualified instructors will lead the land-based training that will take place at the Indigenous Outdoor Learning Centre

Expenditures

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES - 2022-23	
Salaries and benefits	\$ 1,605,389.83
Materials and supplies	\$ 120,263.23
Services	\$ 114,228.45
Travel and PD	\$ 63,219.07
Total	\$ 1,903,100.58

Giving

Sask Polytech received 25 gifts totaling \$66,085 designated to the Indigenous Student Success Strategy. The generous support of donors and community partners contributed to meeting strategy goals: nebah ho?á—welcome, ki-kinomawo—inspire, wiyokihya—empower, and avik wiiyawow—belong. Their generosity provided direct financial supports to Indigenous students and enabled students to participate in fun, cultural activities as a community. Donors also celebrated Indigenous Student successes by supporting the Honour Ceremony and the Indigenous Role Model Calendar. By supporting programming that elevates Indigenous student success donors honour the hard work and achievements of Indigenous students and share in the future success of Indigenous students at Sask Polytech.

Scholarships, awards and bursaries.

Sask Polytech disbursed 421 scholarships and awards valued at \$455,602.55 to Indigenous students. Sask Polytech also disbursed \$151,100 through a donor-supported Indigenous Student Emergency Bursary which provides \$500 in emergency funds to meet urgent need for essentials like food, shelter, medicine, and unanticipated costs related to being in school.

Through the Government of Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship Program, Sask Polytech accessed two student emergency bursaries which provided short-term financial assistance to students. A total of \$93,200 was disbursed to Indigenous students from the program as follows:

- Valued at \$500 each, a total of \$42,000 was disbursed.
- Valued to a maximum of \$2,500, a total of \$51,200 was disbursed.

The Give Back Collection, a new initiative at Saskatchewan Polytechnic campus bookstores has featured original artwork by Dakota artist, Chantel Yuzicappi from Standing Buffalo First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory. 25% of all proceeds are given back to the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Indigenous Student Emergency Bursary, which provides emergency funds for Indigenous students to meet urgent needs for essentials like food, housing. The amount raised by Sask Polytech bookstores with the Give Back Collection and the Orange Shirt Day t-shirt as of May 2023 was \$13,690.

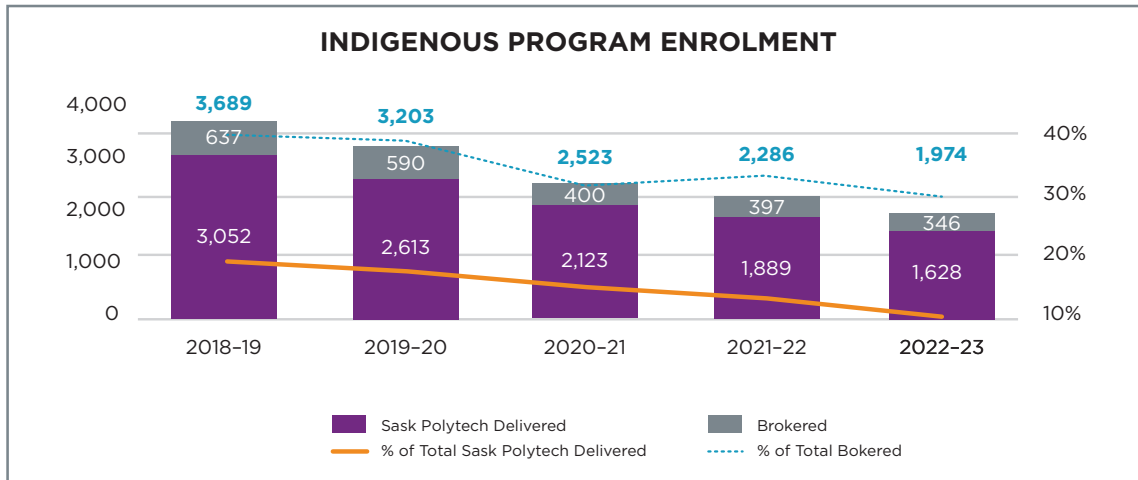
Detail of targeted and actual output and outcome success measures

Sask Polytech has identified outcomes to monitor as the Indigenous Student Success Strategy is implemented. These outcomes focus on increasing Indigenous student enrolment, retention and graduation.

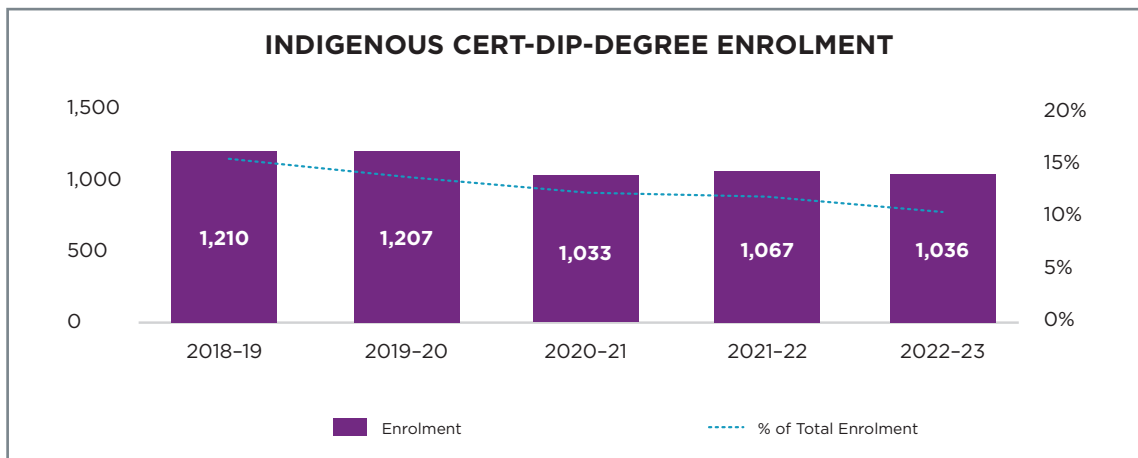
Outcomes and success are measured through the Indigenous balanced report card. The report card will be reviewed, updated and monitored over the course of this strategy (2018-2023).

Indigenous student enrolment, participation and graduation rates

Indigenous student enrolment includes students who self-declare as Indigenous. Indigenous student enrolment, with a total of 1,628 students in 2022-2023 make up 11 per cent of enrolment in Sask Polytech delivered programs. Indigenous student enrolment and student success remains a priority for Sask Polytech. Due to a number of external factors, Sask Polytech has seen a decline in Indigenous student enrollment over the last five years. In the 2020-2021 academic year, Indigenous postsecondary enrolment decreased across the province due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This decline has continued in some program areas, particularly those impacted by provincial administrative changes to funding supports available to adults seeking to complete their high school education. In light of these trends, Saskatchewan Polytechnic has implemented a number of management actions to support Indigenous students and reverse the downward trends.



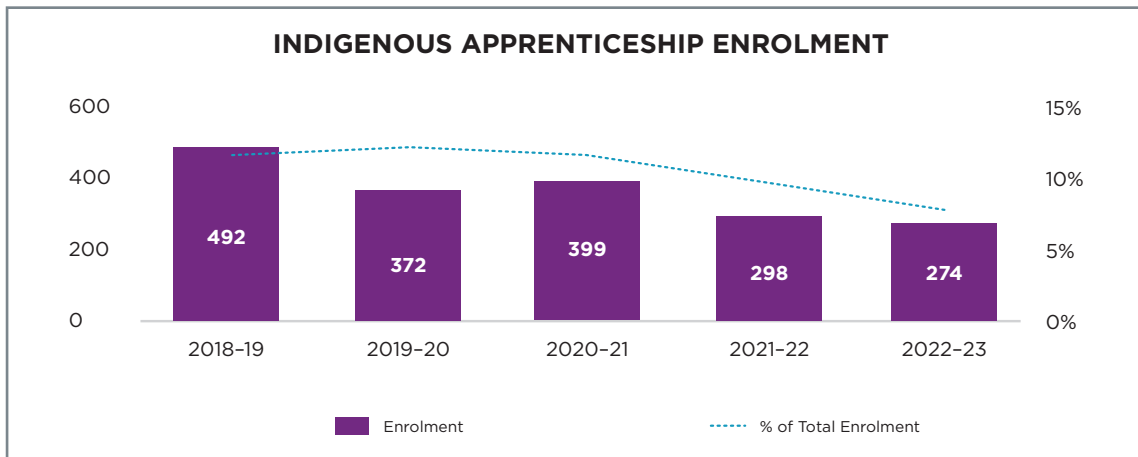
Over the five-year period 2018-2023, the percentage of Indigenous students in certificate, degree and diploma programs has averaged 13 per cent of total enrolment.



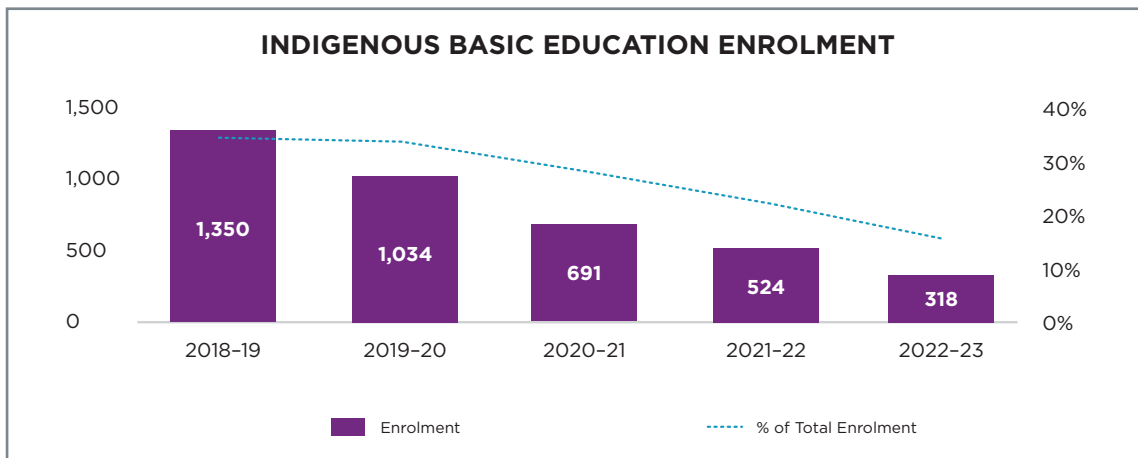


In 2022–2023, there were an additional 460 Indigenous students enrolled in non-program courses through the School of Continuing Education. The School of Continuing Education was launched in September 2020 to meet the needs of business and industry by providing professional development, micro-credentials and corporate training.

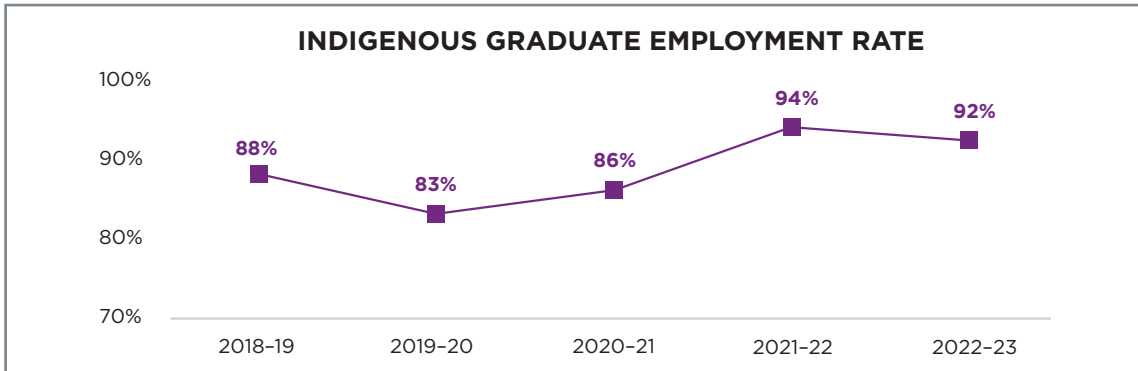
Over the five-year period 2018–2023, the percentage of Indigenous students taking apprenticeship training has averaged 11 per cent of total enrolment. Sask Polytech delivers the in-school portion of apprenticeship training on behalf of the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC). All apprenticeship training is scheduled by the SATCC.



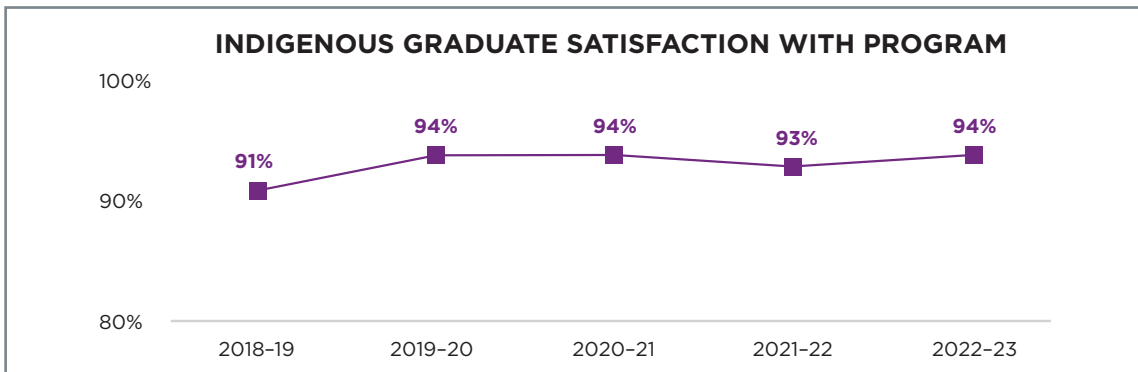
Over the five-year period 2018–2023, the percentage of Indigenous students taking basic education has declined.



Sask Polytech graduate follow-up survey results show the Indigenous graduate employment rate is 92 per cent. This is comparable to Sask Polytech's overall graduate employment which is at 95 per cent.



The Indigenous graduate satisfaction rate is 94 per cent; comparable to the overall graduate satisfaction rate of 95 per cent.



Sask Polytech student data is compiled annually in mid-September for the preceding academic year; July 1 to June 30. The exception is the graduate follow-up survey. The reported results are based on the 2022-2023 graduate follow-up survey of 2021-2022 graduates from Sask Polytech-delivered programs administered six to 12 months following graduation.





saskpolytech.ca/indigenous