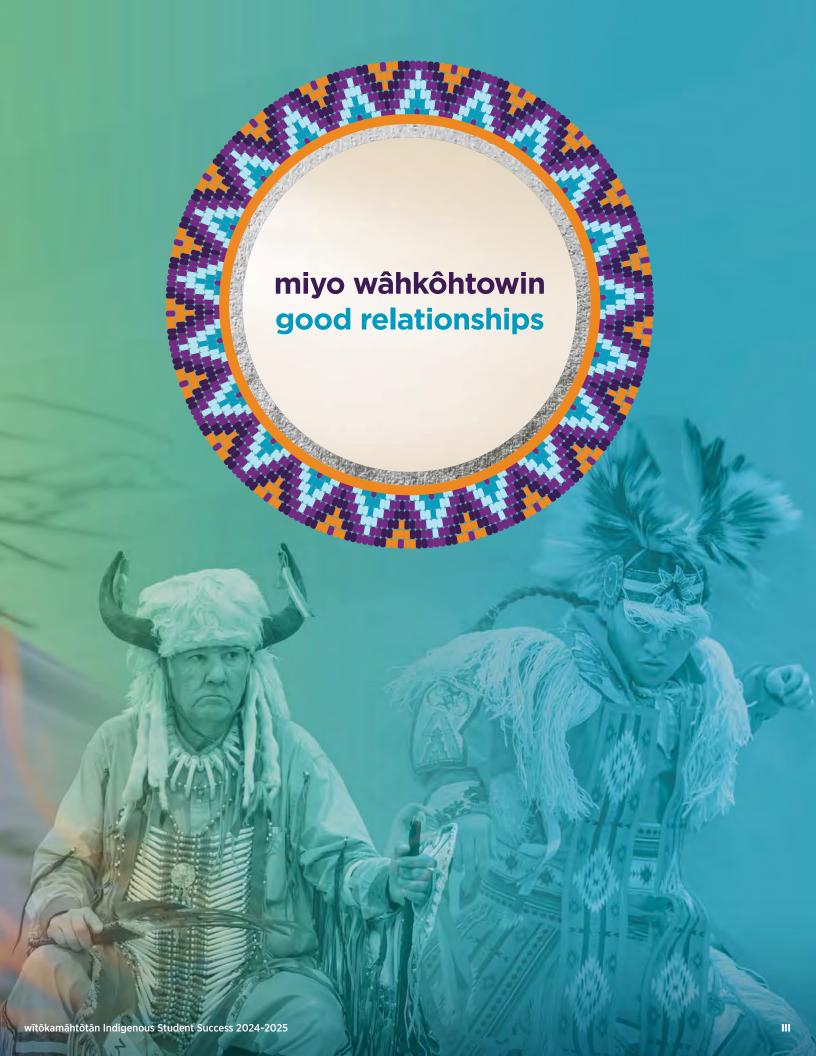
## wītōkamāhtōtān Indigenous Student Success

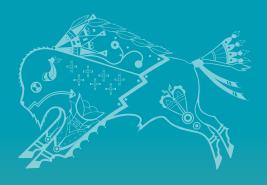
2024-2025 Report







# Indigenous Student Success Strategy



Indigenous students are an important part of Saskatchewan Polytechnic's community. The 2024-2029 Indigenous Student Success Strategy - Wichitowin ahci kaskihtamâsowin ati nikan - Michif for helping each other with success - sets the course for the next five years. The strategy outlines actions to continue our work in removing barriers to access and delivering services to support Indigenous student success. The goal of the strategy 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.



**Hó?ą (Dene) Welcoming:** Help Indigenous students coming to Sask Polytech prepare and be ready for postsecondary life.

**Ombi-ah` (Nakawe) Inspiring:** Help Indigenous students thrive at Sask Polytech.

#### Mnihéya (Nakoda) Empowering:

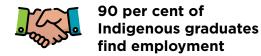
Celebrate Indigenous student success and prepare Indigenous graduates for successful lifelong careers.

**Heca (Dakota) Belonging:** Foster inclusive, respectful and welcoming campuses where Indigenous students feel at home.

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.

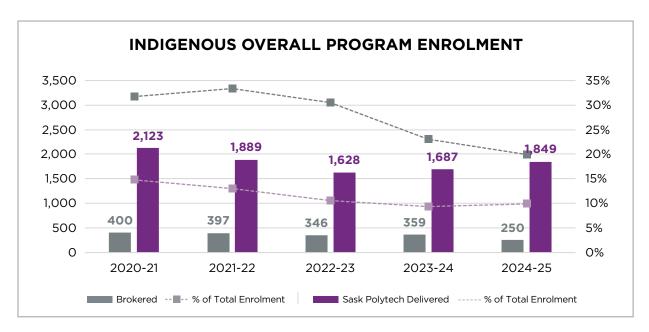
The strategy, along with other institutional plans and initiatives, such as Innovation in Action: Academic Plan 2021–2026, are based on miyo wâhkôhtowin — good relationships. This Cree phrase expresses the positive value and richness of experience that stems from interconnectedness and relationships. 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.

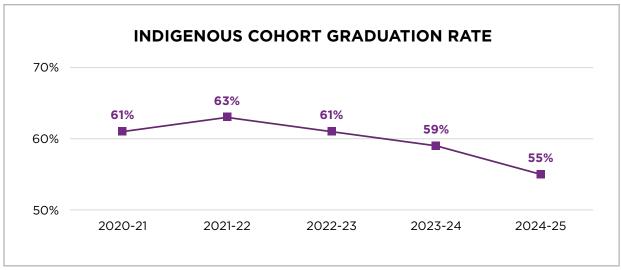
## Statistics and balanced report card results





Sask Polytech has 2,099 self-declared Indigenous students\* who make up 11 per cent of enrolment.





Note: Indigenous program enrolment includes regional colleges.

Indigenous Student Scholarships and Awards
420 awards valued at \$472,525.40

Indigenous Student Emergency Bursary 87 bursaries valued at \$79,100

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.

## Wichitowin advisory committee

The Wichitowin advisory committee is a multidisciplinary group of individuals who 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, wītōkamāhtōtān Indigenous Student Success. It includes representatives from external Indigenous communities, the provost and vice president, Academic, vice provost, manager, wītōkamāhtōtān Indigenous Student Success and associate vice presidents from multiple areas of the institution. It also includes a student representative. Committee members are appointed for a term of 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



nîso (Cree): 2 Saskatchewan Polytechnic

## **Core functions and services**

## **Indigenous student advisors**

Indigenous student advisors play a vital role in advancing student success and supporting Indigenous learners at Sask Polytech. These advisors build strong, culturally responsive relationships that help students navigate academic life and connect with the wider community.

They provide essential support with funding, housing, tutoring and employment resources, while also organizing study groups and cultural, social and informational events. By creating a welcoming environment and advocating for students, advisors help reduce barriers to education and improve outcomes.

Indigenous student advisors also work alongside faculty and leadership to share Indigenous ways of knowing, support curriculum development and promote *miyo wâhkôhtowin*—good relationships. Their contributions are central to Sask Polytech's commitment to reconciliation, Indigenization and student success.

## **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. The Prince Albert campus has a weekly smudging ceremony. Regina campus offers guidance if needed every Monday morning.

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

Pipe Ceremonies—Held seasonally on campus, facilitated by Elders in the community.

**Lunch and learn**—At least monthly on various topics and as needed. For example, Regina hosted a variety of community agencies to share information about how to access community services like YWCA programming.

**Drop-in beading**—All campuses host beading events throughout the year. Regina Campus hosts drop-in beading every Thursday with the Indigenous Counsellors.

**Ribbons skirt workshops**—Regina and Saskatoon hosted Ribbon skirt making workshops.



## wîcihitowin Transition Program

This program is a week-long initiative open to all registered Indigenous students at Sask Polytech. Organized by Indigenous student advisors, the program plays a key role in setting students up for long-term success by easing the transition into post-secondary education.

Offered before the academic year begins, the program helps students prepare for student life by offering support with finalizing funding arrangements and building essential skills.

#### **Activities include:**

- Monthly lunch and learns during the academic year.
- Cultural learning and knowledge sharing
- Personal skill development workshops
- Academic assessment and early learning support
- Peer group connection and community-building

This early, holistic support helps reduce barriers, build confidence and foster a sense of belonging. By combining academic preparation with cultural grounding and peer connection, the wîcihitowin Transition Program strengthens retention, enhances student well-being and contributes meaningfully to the overall success of Indigenous learners at Sask Polytech.





#### **Honour ceremonies**

Sask Polytech has been hosting honour ceremonies to celebrate the hard work, dedication and achievements of Indigenous students since 1990. The theme of the 2025 honour ceremony was duhú noweni noweba hó?a, which means our time to shine in Dene. Over 165 students were honoured.

The Dakota flower represents growth and evolution of students. The flower is designated special and is to be used only for gifts of higher value and significance. It will be associated with recognition for successful achievement and outcomes for individual students and for those who have made a specific or major contribution to Indigenous student success at Sask Polytech.





## **Projects**

#### Role model calendar

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 stories are unique and describe how services, such as the wîcihitowin 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 Sask Polytech 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.

## **Season of Sharing**

The Season of Sharing featured five days of holiday cheer this December with a collection of activities and initiatives intended to lift spirits, promote emotional well-being and foster cultural learning and celebration for Indigenous students.

A weeks-worth of on-campus events were held in each city to celebrate the season with fun activities and prizes coordinated through the Indigenous Student Centres.

The in-person events at all four Sask Polytech locations included a festive lunch, a hot chocolate bar, gingerbread house and cookie decorating, sweater contests, holiday games and more.

The Season of Sharing saw an incredible turnout of over 1,100 participants across our campuses, demonstrating the program's significant impact through embracing the spirit of togetherness and cultural learning.

The Season of Sharing also facilitates meaningful engagement between industry sponsors and students. Thank you to this year's sponsors, AMI Supply and STC Industrial Group who had the opportunity to connect with potential future talent.





## **Projects**

## **Community kitchen**

This year, Regina campus launched a monthly community kitchen with support from the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation's Truth and Reconciliation Fund. The program aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action by focusing on education, culture and language.

The community kitchen offers Indigenous students hands-on experience in preparing healthy, affordable meals, while also addressing food insecurity and promoting Indigenous food sovereignty. Sessions include meal planning, accessing local resources traditional nutrition and wellness as well as learning traditional hunting and harvesting practices.

One highlight was a land-based learning event at Peepeekisis Cree Nation, where students from Sask Polytech and Regina Public High School's land-based classroom, guided by Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, participated in a buffalo harvest. The experience included a pipe ceremony, processing the buffalo and learning the cultural significance of traditional practices.

## **Study abroad opportunities**

Sask Polytech is committed to global engagement, which includes providing opportunities for students to participate in global study abroad opportunities. In the 2024-2025 academic year, 30 Indigenous students participated in a study abroad experience to increase global knowledge, improve intercultural communication and learn more about their field of study.

These global learning experiences were funded by the Government of Canada's Global Skills Opportunity Fund (GSO) which aims to empower post-secondary institutions to increase the participation of Canadians in international learning opportunities — especially Indigenous students, students with disabilities and those from low socio-economic backgrounds who have traditionally faced barriers to participation.



30 Indigenous students participated in study abroad



46% of students participating in study abroad identified as Indigenous



## **Events and celebrations**

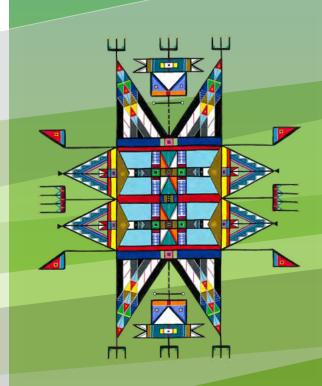
wītōkamāhtōtān Indigenous Student Success has lead Sask Polytech's recognition of the following:

- Orange Shirt Day / National Day for Truth and Reconciliation—all proceeds from the sale of Orange Shirt Day tee shirts support Indigenous students through emergency bursaries.
- Louis Riel Day
- Moose Hide Campaign
- National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Peoples
- National Indigenous Peoples Day



## 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.



## 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.

#### Innovation in Action Academic Plan 2021–2026

Innovation in Action Academic Plan 2021-2026 supports the goals of the Indigenous student success strategy to hó?ą — welcome, ombi-ah`—inspire, mnihéya —empower, and heca—belong. Guided by the Indigenous Declaration and in the spirit of miyo wâhkôhtowin, 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.



šaglógan (Dakota): 8 Saskatchewan Polytechnic

## **Indigenous community relations**

## **Community Relations**

During this academic year, our teams made many community connections. The Indigenous Community Relations team hosted an Indigenous Post-Secondary Funders Informational Session in the fall. 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. By hosting booths at career fairs and participating in educational and youth focused events such as the Think Indigenous conference, the Indspire Soaring Youth Conference and Treaty 4 Days – we had the opportunity to connect with Indigenous youth and professionals to showcase the wide range of programs and supports available at Sask Polytech.

With Indigenous enrolment historically underrepresented at the Nutrien School of Mining, Manufacturing and Engineering Technologies, we collaborated to raise awareness and provide meaningful funding opportunities for successful applicants.

### **Round Dance**

This year, Sask Polytech hosted two round dances. Round dances are a central aspect of Indigenous culture and provide an opportunity to bring people together in a spirit of unity and friendship.

At Prince Albert campus, Saskatchewan Polytechnic hosted a round dance to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two spirit, transgender and gender-diverse+ (MMIWG2S+) people.

Thank you to the Government of Saskatchewan for providing financial support for the Empowering Our People Round Dance through the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ Community Response Fund.

At Saskatoon campus, we hosted a round dance to honour our graduates and alumni.

This round dance reflected Sask Polytech's 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.



## **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 the Indigenous student recruitment activities plan for Sask Polytech and work with Sask Polytech's Advancement division to grow an active Indigenous alumni group.

#### **Indigenous student success coaches**

Indigenous 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 in urban areas
- Advancing reconciliation
- Hosting student focused event (Spend-a-Day Event) on campus for all high school grade 11 &12 along with high school counsellors to attend each year
- Attending community hosted events such as career fairs and Indigenous focused events to network with community agencies
- Assisting students with post secondary funding through first nations
- · Triaging and monitoring Indigenous email for general inquiries and provide information when required

## **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. Approximately 351 applications were funded in 2024-25.

## **SGI driving program** (With funding from SGI)

Driver training is provided to students enrolled in the Sask Polytech Literacy and Adult Basic Education programs or any Post Secondary students attending SaskPolytech in Saskatoon and Regina. The program runs in April with hopes of completion by May.

## **Community visits**

Mistawasis

Buffalo River Dene Nation

English River First Nation

Shoal Lake

Montreal Lake

Sucker River

Lac La Ronge

La Ronge

Sturgeon Lake

Prince Albert

Leask

Beauval Ochapowace



wikčémna (Dakota): 10 Saskatchewan Polytechnic

## **Expenditures**

<b>SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES - 2024-25</b>	
Salaries and benefits	\$ 1,467,212.30
Materials and supplies	\$ 140,651.44
Services	\$ 130,074.42
Travel and PD	\$ 81,988.89
Total	\$ 1,819,927.05

## **Giving**

Sask Polytech received nine gifts totaling \$232,010 designated to the Indigenous Student Success Strategy. The generous support of donors and community partners contributed to meeting strategy goals: hó?q—welcome, ombi-ah`—inspire, mnihéya—empower, and heca—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 420 scholarships and awards valued at \$472,525.40 to Indigenous students. Sask Polytech also disbursed \$33,030 through a donor-supported Indigenous Strategy Emergency Bursary, which provides up to \$1,000 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 provide short-term financial assistance to students. A total of \$36,820 was disbursed to Indigenous students from the program as follows:

- Valued at \$500 each, a total of \$5,000 was disbursed.
- Valued to a maximum of \$2,500, a total of \$31,820 was disbursed.

The Give Back Collection, a new initiative at Sask Polytech campus stores 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 funds for Indigenous students to meet urgent needs for essentials like food, and housing. The amount raised by the Sask Polytech Campus store with the Give Back Collection and the Orange Shirt Day t-shirts as of May 2025 was \$12,612.

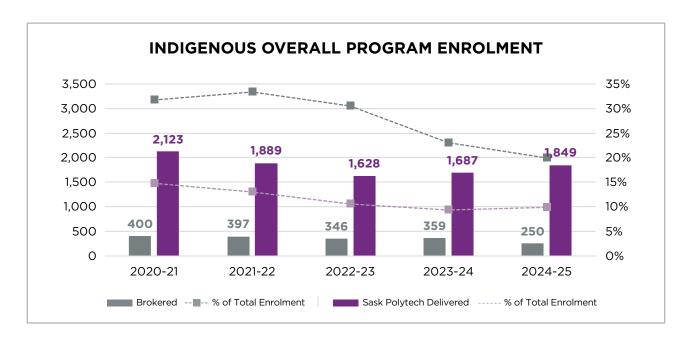
## Detail of targeted and actual output and outcome success measures

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.

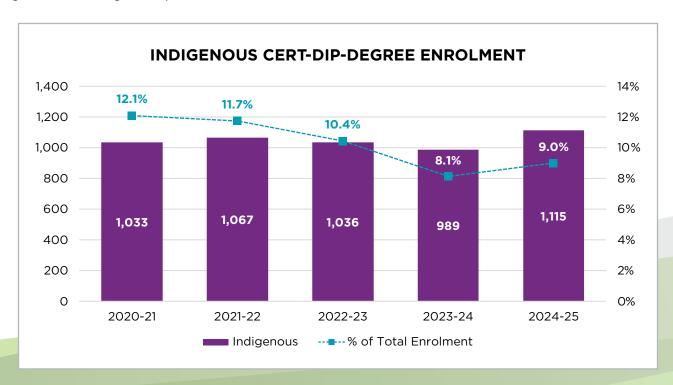
Outcomes and success are measured through the Indigenous balanced report card. The report card will be reviewed, updated and monitored over the course of this strategy (2024-2029).

## Indigenous student enrolment, participation and graduation rates

Indigenous student enrolment includes students who self-declare as Indigenous. Indigenous student enrolment, with a total of 1,849 students in 2024-25 makes up ten per cent of enrolment in Sask Polytech delivered programs.

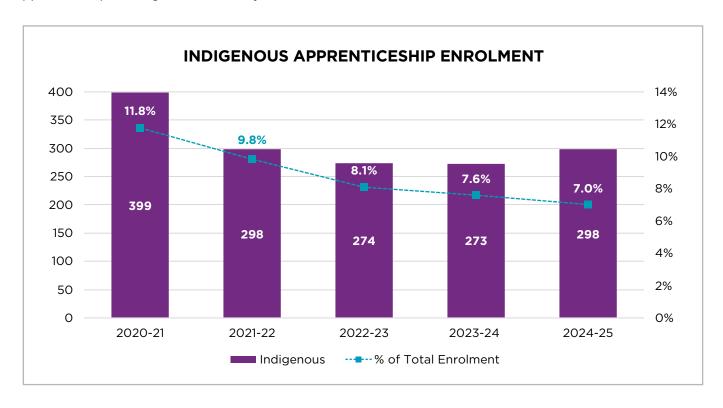


Over the five-year period 2021-2025, the percentage of Indigenous students in certificate, degree and diploma programs has averaged ten per cent of total enrolment.

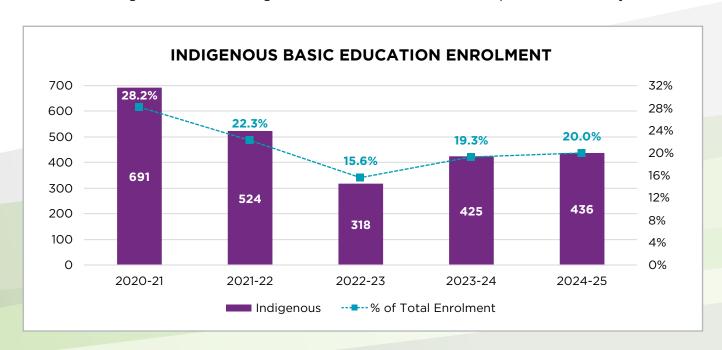


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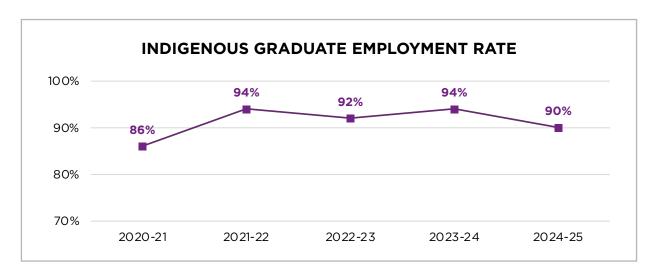
Over the five-year period 2021-2025, the percentage of Indigenous students taking apprenticeship training has averaged nine per cent of total enrolment. Sask Polytech delivers the in-school portion of apprenticeship training on behalf of the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC). All apprenticeship training is scheduled by the SATCC.



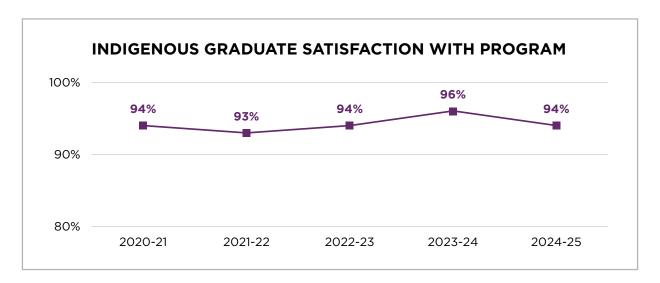
The number of Indigenous students taking basic education has increased in the past two academic years.



Sask Polytech graduate follow-up survey results show the Indigenous graduate employment rate is 90 per cent; comparable to Sask Polytech's overall graduate employment which is 93 per cent.



The Indigenous graduate satisfaction rate is 94 per cent. This is on par with Sask Polytech's overall graduate satisfaction which is at 94 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 2024–2025 graduate follow-up survey of 2023–2024 graduates from Sask Polytech-delivered programs administered six to 12 months following graduation.

