



MEMORANDUM

October 10, 2023
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent
RESOURCE	Dean Bernard, Northern and Indigenous Relations
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 2: Role of the Board Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	BP 2: Education Planning and Programming Board Annual Work Plan <i>Education Act</i>
SUBJECT	ATHABASCA DELTA COMMUNITY SCHOOL REPORT

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

BACKGROUND

Parkland School Division (PSD) assumed operation of Athabasca Delta Community School (ADCS) effective September 1, 2022 as the interim operating authority. Throughout the 2022-2023 School year, PSD has worked in partnership with Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, Mikisew Cree First Nation, and the community of Fort Chipewyan to provide a quality education while a community education authority is established.

REPORT SUMMARY

The Superintendent employs a Division Principal to be responsible for Northern and Indigenous Relations with an initial purpose of facilitating the operation of ADCS and developing relationships and partnerships with Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, and Mikisew Cree First Nation as partners in education.

This report provides an update to the Board regarding finances, enrolment, staffing, school infrastructure, staff housing, technology, programming and services for ADCS students, since assuming the role of Interim Education Authority.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

MF:kz



ATHABASCA DELTA COMMUNITY SCHOOL REPORT

OCTOBER 2023

Presented to the Board of Trustees, October 10, 2023
 Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent
 Resource: Dean Bernard, Division Principal

Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

BACKGROUND

In September 2022, Parkland School Division (PSD) became the Interim Education Authority for Athabasca Delta Community School (ADCS) in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, through the Minister of Education's Ministerial order 011-2002. Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort Chipewyan Métis Association and Mikisew Cree First Nation are in the process of establishing a Community Education Authority. PSD is working in partnership with the local community to operate ADCS until the Community Education Authority assumes operation.

REPORT / TOPIC

1. Financial Operations

ADCS has operated under the budget allocated by the Government of Alberta (GOA) and under the 1987 Tuition Agreement between the Nations, Federal Government and local School Authority.

Conditional Grants

PSD receives an annual conditional grant of \$200,000 per year from the GOA to cover increased costs to PSD Administration for a Divisional Principal and additional travel for PSD staff to support ADCS and community relations. In addition, PSD received a conditional capital grant of \$2.0M for maintenance and renovations of the teacherages in Fort Chipewyan and \$300K to address health and safety concerns at Athabasca Delta Community School.

Northern Allowance

PSD made a special request to Alberta Education for additional Northern Allowance similar to the allowance granted to Fort McMurray area school divisions. As per the 2023-2024 Funding Manual:

Allocation Criteria

1. This living allowance is only provided to the following school jurisdictions who have employees that live and work in the vicinity of Fort McMurray:

- a. The Fort McMurray School Division;*
- b. The Fort McMurray Roman Catholic Separate School Division;*
- c. The Greater North Central Francophone Education Region (Centre Communautaire Scolaire Boréal only); and*
- d. The Northland School Division (Fort McKay and Anzac schools only).*

The Current Collective Agreement(s)/Employee Agreements provide for a Northern Location Allowance of \$3,584 per year. Effective Sept, 2023, an additional \$1040 per month allowance has been granted for all PSD Employees (prorated to FTE) working and residing in Fort Chipewyan for the 2023-2024 school year. This additional allocation raises any northern allowances to a similar level available to other organizations/employees working in Fort Chipewyan (i.e. health care, RCMP, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo staff).

2. Staffing

ADCS is staffed based on the Tuition Agreement, community needs, and identified student supports and school enrolment.

Position(s)	2022-2023 Budgeted Staff	2022-2023 Actual Staff	2023-2024 Budgeted Staff
Teaching/Admin/ Instructional Staff	15	14	16.5
Educational Assistants	5	2-3	3
Speech Language Program Assistant	1	1	1
Cooks	2	2	2
School Secretary	1	1	1.5
Bus Driver	1	1 (½ Year) / Covered by existing staff for the second half of the year	1
Division Maintenance Worker	1	1	1

Staffing has been an ongoing challenge for ADCS, both this year and in the past. We have continued to adapt our processes for recruitment and retention, including improved Northern Allowance, recruitment and retention strategies.

ADCS is currently fully staffed for all teaching/instructional positions, and educational assistant positions and continues to recruit for a vacant .5 FTE School Secretary position. Effective Monday, Oct 2nd the vacant Bus Driver position has been filled.

Historic HR Challenges

Isolation/Northern Environment:

- Fort Chipewyan is a remote community only accessible by ice roads between mid-Dec and late March, weather permitting
- As a “fly-in” community, there are limited services and amenities available
- Fort Chipewyan experiences extreme cold weather and long periods of darkness
- Limited access to recreational activities
- Fort Chipewyan has a small population (approx. 1000) limiting the availability of local candidates for vacant positions

Cost of Living

- Staff have elevated costs to either travel to Edmonton/Fort McMurray for services (including medical or dental), purchase of items or social activities
- The cost of basic items like food and household items is very high

Compensation

- Teacher salaries are slightly higher under the PSD/ADCS Collective Agreement than other Alberta Collective Agreements but other Northern Jurisdictions (i.e. Northwest Territories) have more competitive compensation packages

Housing

- PSD maintains 14 housing units
- There has been an insufficient number of units, which necessitates some staff needing to share accommodations
- There are few other rental options available

Work Environment

- As a small school, there are few staff to share the many tasks associated with a public education (coaches, student activities, supervision)
- There is a lack of access to specialized support services for students with complex needs
- With a chronic shortage of staff and very few substitute/casual staff, there are many days when staff must cover additional classes

Timing of hiring

- Many positions advertised in Fort Chipewyan remain unfilled into August, making planning problematic

Professional Development

- Access to Professional Development has been limited due to cost of travel, lack of local availability and lack of substitute teachers

3. School Infrastructure

Maintenance is staffed by one Division Maintenance worker. Upgrades made in 2022-2023 include:

- Upgrading and repairing the boiler system
- Mitigating the damages, a water leak that occurred in July 2022, damaging two instructional spaces
- Replaced a compressor for the school commercial kitchen
- Upgraded the school security system
- Significant maintenance on the school propane tanks

4. Staff Housing

PSD has 14 houses/duplexes to accommodate staff. Teacherages are needed to accommodate teaching staff in a community with limited rental options. When available, support staff/non-teaching staff may be provided housing if available.

PSD is in the process of adding suites (basement suites in existing units) to accommodate future growth and programming needs with anticipation that it will be complete in the fall, 2023. Upon completion, there will be 17 units available to house staff.

Upgrades to staff housing/procedures in the 2022-2023 school year included:

- Establishing rental agreements, including criteria for furnishings provided
- Replacement of furniture/household items as required
- Maintenance of all yards and grounds

5. Transportation

ADCS currently has two buses; a primary bus for the daily routes and a spare bus in case there are any mechanical or safety issues. The spare bus is equipped with a wheel chair lift.

Division Vehicles: PSD has two trucks designated for use within Fort Chipewyan. One truck is assigned to the maintenance worker and a second is used for school use. One truck was replaced during the 2022-2023 school year.

6. Student Supports and Services

Student Services

ADCS values diversity and the unique contributions that each student brings to the classroom. The Division Student Services Team, in conjunction with the school, provides appropriate support and services to meet the needs of diverse learners including students with complex learning needs. Student Supports and Services include, but are not limited to:

- Providing support to Kindergarten students: PSD's Division Principal, who oversees Early Learning, as well as the Divisional Early Learning Facilitator, offer online and on-site support to the early learning program, promoting a positive and nurturing learning environment for young students.
- The implementation of Individual Education Program Plans (including Individual Program Plans,

- Behaviour Support Plans, Individual Care Plans, Safety Plans, and Success-in-School Plans).
- Building capacity around evidence-based practices for supporting diverse learners in meeting the outcomes of the Programs of Study, specifically in the areas of literacy and numeracy, through online and onsite support from the Division Principal of Student Services and the Divisional Complex Needs Facilitators.
- Providing Speech and Language Services to identified students. A Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) oversees these supports through regular screenings, assessments, and a blend of onsite and online services delivery. A full-time Speech and Language Assistant (SLPA) works at ADCS to implement the Speech and Language support plans under the supervision of the SLP. These services require the consent of the student’s guardian.
- Providing Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy to identified students within ADCS through a partnership with Tamaca Services. These services require the consent of the student’s guardian.
- Providing Psychological assessments, as required, to identified students. These assessments require the consent of the student’s guardian. Psychological Assessments can provide valuable insights into a child's unique learning and emotional needs. By identifying strengths, challenges, and potential areas for support, these assessments enable tailored educational strategies that foster a nurturing and effective learning environment.

7. Comprehensive School Health

Athabasca Delta Community School staff recognize that student learning and student health are interconnected and acknowledge the school’s role in creating and supporting healthy school communities as foundations for optimal learning. A healthy school community is one that supports the wellness of students and staff through the implementation of a Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach.

A CSH approach focuses on three tenets:

- Active living,
- Healthy eating, and
- Mental well-being.



By providing comprehensive support through qualified professionals, targeted strategies, and strategic partnerships, ADCS fosters a caring and inclusive environment where students' mental health is prioritized. With ongoing initiatives and future plans, the school reinforces its commitment to supporting students' emotional growth, enabling them to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Comprehensive School Health Supports include, but are not limited to:

- **Universal and Targeted Mental Health Strategies:** To address diverse mental health needs, ADCS employs a two-pronged approach. Universal strategies are implemented to support all students, promoting overall mental wellness within the school community. Additionally, targeted strategies cater to smaller groups and individuals, providing personalized mental health services.
- **Helping Hands to Success:** ADCS is partnered with Alberta Health Services in the delivery of this Mental Health Capacity Building (MHCB) in School Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to establish projects that provide the staffing and support required to implement an integrated, school-based, community mental health promotion, prevention, and early intervention program. ADCS has been involved with this project since 2006 and has titled its program 'Helping Hands to Success'. Two staff members are responsible for the program planning and delivery, with the support of the Division Principal of Wellness and Community Partnerships. The program supports children and youth under the age of 19 and their families year-round within the community in Fort Chipewyan and is reflective of the needs and resources of the community. Highlighted prevention activities this past school year included: Mental health classes in various grades that included social communication and calming strategy activities, a parenting book club, a Parent and Tot night teaching positive affirmation skills, and a drive-through for mental health event.
- **School Counsellor:** ADCS is equipped with a qualified School Counsellor who possesses a Master of Counselling and who can provide Individual mental health Support to students, with the consent of the student's guardian. Throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, the School Counsellor made 11 trips from December to June, actively engaging with students and providing support. Going forward, biweekly visits are planned to continue supporting students' mental health needs.
- **Clinical Supervision and Support:** To ensure the effectiveness of mental health services, the School Counsellors are able to access support and clinical supervision through the PSD Divisional Psychologist. This supervision enhances the Counsellor's skills and knowledge, further enriching the support they provide to students.
- **Apple Schools:** ADCS is partnered with APPLE Schools (A Project Promoting healthy Living for Everyone in schools), which is an innovative school-focused health promotion initiative. A school-based School Health Facilitator supports Comprehensive School Health within ADCS, which focuses on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity. During the 2022-2023 school year, the School Health Facilitator travelled to Fort McMurray to attend an Apple Schools workshop with the Division's Health and Wellness Facilitator. This joint partnership further enhances the school's capacity to support student wellness.
- **Partnership with K'ai Taile Market:** ADCS collaborates with K'ai Taile Market to provide students with nutritious meals throughout the day. The school's investment in hallway fridges enhances students' access to food, acknowledging the role of proper nutrition in mental well-being.

8. Crisis/Trauma Response:

PSD's Divisional Trauma Follow-up Team works with the School Administrators to support students and staff following a crisis or traumatic event. The purpose of the Trauma Follow-up Team is to help those impacted by a critical incident to begin the process of re-establishing a positive emotional state.

- In response to increased mental health needs in Fort Chipewyan during the 2022-2023 school year, the Division Principal of Wellness and Community Partnerships and the Divisional Psychologist visited Fort Chip to provide additional support.

ADCS remains committed to refining its trauma response and exploring community interest in establishing a Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol. Additionally, the school aims to explore Suicide Intervention Protocols that are appropriate to meet the needs of the students in a fly-in community to further support for students' mental health needs.

9. Technology

PSD continued to improve the technology infrastructure at ADCS in the 22-23 school year. Upgrades include:

- New school server
- New router and upgraded data switching
- New interactive classroom projectors procured, with deployment set for the 23-24 school year
- New wireless infrastructure
- Significant software updates
- Additional 51 iPad's procured and provisioned
- All housing units equipped with High Speed Internet

10. Indigenous Ways of Knowing

In accordance with our commitment to fostering Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Perspectives within Parkland School Division, we are proud to share the progress made by Athabasca Delta Community School in the 2022-23 school year. The school has taken various actions to promote cultural understanding, preserve traditions, and enhance educational experiences for students, particularly focusing on the teachings of the Métis, Dene, and Cree nations. By engaging elders, incorporating Indigenous languages, and implementing land-based learning opportunities, the school has successfully advanced these essential action items.

Engagement with Elders:

Recognizing the importance of elders' wisdom and guidance, Athabasca Delta Community School has actively involved them in promoting Indigenous Ways of Knowing. Elders were invited to the school to share their knowledge and expertise, specifically in the areas of moose meat carving and smoking. Their teachings have not only enriched students' understanding of traditional practices but also fostered a deep appreciation for cultural heritage. Additionally, the elders conducted smudging ceremonies to cleanse and purify the school, creating a respectful and inclusive environment. A dedicated Elder space was added during the 2022-2023 school year.

The Teaching of Protocols:

To ensure that students have a comprehensive understanding of cultural protocols, the school prioritized the teachings of all three nations: Métis, Dene, and Cree. Elders played a pivotal role in educating students about these protocols, emphasizing the significance of cultural traditions and the proper ways of engaging with them.

This approach has instilled respect and reverence among students, enabling them to interact with Indigenous knowledge in a meaningful and authentic manner.

Cree and Dene language and culture:

Athabasca Delta Community School provides all students K-9 with language instruction in either Cree or Dene. Additionally, ADCS has embraced the use of Cree and Dene words within the classroom for educational purposes. By integrating these languages into everyday learning experiences, students are exposed to diverse linguistic perspectives and gain a deeper understanding of Indigenous cultures. Implementing a "Cree and Dene Word of the Week" initiative further reinforces the importance of language revitalization and encourages students to appreciate the richness of Indigenous linguistic heritage.

Land-Based Learning and Cultural Enrichment:

Recognizing the profound connection between Indigenous cultures and the land, the school has implemented various land-based learning options. Students have the opportunity to engage in activities that deepen their understanding of the Cree and Dene traditions, including exploring the natural environment, participating in traditional practices, and learning about sustainable land management.

Expanded Educational Opportunities:

Athabasca Delta Community School ensures that all students have access to Indigenous Language learning opportunities. As part of the curriculum, students are provided with five weekly classes where they can choose to learn either Cree or Dene. This initiative not only promotes language acquisition but also fosters cultural awareness and appreciation.

Professional Development

Through a grant from Suncor, 2 staff members and the Division Principal attended the Indspire Conference. Indspire is a National Gathering for Indigenous Education that occurred in Winnipeg Manitoba in November, 2022.

Athabasca Delta Community School has demonstrated dedication and progress in advancing Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Perspectives within the Parkland School Division. Through the engagement of elders, incorporation of Cree and Dene languages, implementation of land-based learning options, and various cultural enrichment initiatives, the school has created an environment that respects, preserves, and celebrates the traditions and knowledge of the Métis, Dene, and Cree nations. These efforts serve as a testament to Parkland School Division's commitment to reconciliation and the holistic education of all students.

10. ADCS Equity, Diversity and Community

Athabasca Delta Community School (ADCS) has demonstrated a strong commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Community by fostering partnerships and implementing various initiatives to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for its students and community. Through these efforts, ADCS aims to prioritize the communities desire to increase Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing while honouring the cultural backgrounds, and aspirations of First Nations, Métis Students.

Partnerships: ADCS has established partnerships with various organizations, including:

1. Parks Canada: Collaborating with Parks Canada allows students to engage in outdoor learning experiences and gain a deeper connection with the natural environment.
2. Fort Chipewyan Community High School: Partnering with the community high school fosters a sense of community and supports shared learning experiences including professional development.
3. Apple Schools: This partnership helps promote health and wellness among students through the Health Champion program.
4. PSD Divisional Staff: Working together with the Divisional staff allows for a coordinated approach to educational programs and support services. Thirty (30) times Division Principals, Facilitators, subject area specialists and Executive traveled to Fort Chipewyan during the 2022-2023 school year.
5. Spirit North: Engaging in cross-country skiing and outdoor activities with Spirit North helps promote physical activity and Indigenous culture.
6. Green Planet Analytics: Participating in greenhouse initiatives promotes environmental awareness and sustainable practices.
7. RCMP: ADCS's involvement with the RCMP emphasizes community safety and security. For example, the RCMP prepare and serve breakfast one day per week to the students as part of the school nutrition program.

Educational Initiatives: ADCS actively implements educational initiatives that celebrate Indigenous culture and support student learning. Some notable initiatives include:

1. Muskrat Camp/Dissections: Land-based teachings, such as muskrat camp/dissections, provide hands-on learning experiences that connect students with traditional Indigenous practices.
2. National Indigenous Languages Day: Commemorating this day emphasizes the importance of Indigenous languages and cultural heritage.
3. Nature-Based Kindergarten (collaboration with Muir Lake Program): The nature-based kindergarten program fosters a deeper connection with the environment and outdoor learning.
4. Mechanics of Bicycles: This program educates students about bicycle mechanics and repairs, promoting practical skills and knowledge.
5. Métis President and Interagency Meetings: Engaging with the Métis president and participating in interagency meetings enhance community connections and collaboration.
6. Medicine Making - Spruce Gum Salve: Students learning traditional medicine making highlights the significance of Indigenous healing practices.
7. Remembrance Day Ceremony: The ceremony acknowledges the sacrifices made by service members and instills a sense of gratitude in students.
8. Christmas Concert and Kisen Kona Carnival: These events celebrate cultural diversity and community participation, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

After-School Programs and Clubs

ADCS offers a diverse range of after-school programs and clubs, such as the Hands-On Club, Jigging, Sports, Student Council, and Recess Monitors. These activities contribute to students' personal growth, social skills, and leadership development.

The school's staff is dedicated to building strong relationships with Indigenous communities and partners connected to PSD as a crucial step toward understanding and serving the unique needs of the ADCS students and their families. By engaging with these communities, ADCS gains insights into cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and needs, which inform the development of inclusive educational programs and policies. The school's efforts emphasize Equity, Diversity, and Community through various partnerships and initiatives, fostering a sense of belonging and community among students and promoting cultural awareness. From partnerships with Parks Canada and Fort Chipewyan Community High School to educational initiatives like Muskrat camp/dissections and Nature-Based Kindergarten, ADCS strives to create inclusive environments that expose students to authentic, engaging, and culturally appropriate learning experiences. Additionally, after-school programs, clubs, and special events further support personal growth, leadership development, and cultural celebrations within the school community. Overall, ADCS's dedication to Indigenous perspectives and equitable learning experiences fosters a sense of community and inclusivity within the school and its neighbouring Indigenous communities.

11. Student and Staff Wellness

Prioritizing the wellness and overall well-being of students and staff remains a fundamental commitment at Athabasca Delta Community School (ADCS). The school's dedication to fostering a nurturing environment is evident through various initiatives that support students' mental, physical, and emotional health while also addressing the well-being of its staff members.

Student Wellness:

1. Improved Common Area for Jr. Sr. High: ADCS recognizes the importance of providing students with a welcoming and inviting common area during lunchtime. The improved common area fosters a positive social environment, encouraging students to connect with their peers and form meaningful relationships.
2. Daily Physical Education (PE): ADCS believes in the significance of daily PE classes to promote a healthy and active lifestyle for students. Engaging in regular physical activity not only enhances physical health but also contributes to improved focus and concentration in the classroom.
3. Structured Recess and Lunchtime Breaks: By implementing structured breaks, ADCS ensures that students have designated times for relaxation and play. These breaks contribute to reducing stress levels and fostering a positive school experience.
4. Helping Hands Wellness Workshop: Junior high students at ADCS benefit from the Helping Hands wellness workshops built into their schedule. These workshops equip students with valuable coping skills, emotional support, and essential life skills, promoting mental resilience and well-being.

5. **Open Communication with Parents/Guardians:** ADCS values open communication and facilitates effective dialogue between teachers and parents/guardians through a communication log. This collaboration strengthens the school-family partnership and ensures that students receive the necessary support both at home and in school.
6. **Extracurricular Activities:** The school's dedication to student wellness extends to extracurricular activities such as intramurals and after-school volleyball programs. Engaging in sports and physical activities not only promotes teamwork but also boosts students' self-esteem and overall sense of accomplishment.
7. **Gym Organization and Safety:** ADCS prioritizes the safety and well-being of students by ensuring the gym is well-organized and equipped with appropriate resources. A safe and engaging gym environment fosters positive experiences during physical education classes and school events.

Staff Wellness:

1. **Weekly Staff Meetings and Effective Communication:** ADCS places great importance on fostering a collaborative work environment by conducting weekly staff meetings. These meetings serve as platforms for open communication, enabling educators to share ideas, address challenges, and collectively enhance the learning experience for students.
2. **Staff Engagement with Game Nights:** ADCS acknowledges the significance of staff engagement and well-being by organizing game nights. These events foster camaraderie and create opportunities for staff members to relax and enjoy each other's company.
3. **Recognizing and Celebrating Staff:** The school values its staff and demonstrates appreciation by recognizing and celebrating birthdays. Acknowledging individual contributions builds a sense of belonging and appreciation within the school community.
4. **Staff Christmas Party:** ADCS celebrates the festive season by hosting a staff Christmas party. This event offers a platform for staff to come together, strengthen bonds, and foster a positive work culture.
5. **Challenges and Support:** ADCS recognizes the challenges of staff attendance and the shortage of substitute teachers, which can lead to increased stress and anxiety among staff members. The school remains committed to providing adequate support and exploring solutions to mitigate these challenges.
6. **Ice Breaker Activities and Collaboration:** To cultivate a supportive work environment, ADCS initiates ice breaker activities and grade group meetings, encouraging collaboration and teamwork among staff members.
7. **Collaboration with "Parkland South" Schools:** ADCS actively seeks to develop collaboration with schools such as Greystone and Millgrove under the Parkland School Division. This collaboration fosters a sense of community among educators and provides opportunities for professional development and shared learning experiences.

Athabasca Delta Community School's commitment to student and staff wellness is evident in the diverse range of initiatives undertaken. By prioritizing student well-being through improved facilities, regular physical education, structured breaks, and valuable workshops, ADCS nurtures a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Simultaneously, the school's efforts to prioritize staff wellness through open communication, engaging activities, recognition, and collaboration further enrich the work environment to help with staff retention.

12. Programming and Pedagogy

Reading Buddies

ADCS has embraced the power of peer collaboration with its Reading Buddies program. Higher-grade students engage in reading sessions with their younger counterparts, fostering a supportive and encouraging learning atmosphere. This initiative not only cultivates a sense of mentorship but also strengthens literacy skills, resulting in enhanced confidence and academic growth for all students involved.

Supporting Mental Health and Wellness

The Helping Hands initiative at ADCS addresses students' mental health and wellness needs. By providing a safe space for open conversations and offering resources, the school actively promotes the well-being of its students. This compassionate approach to mental health encourages students to flourish both academically and emotionally.

Embracing Green Energy and Sustainability

ADCS has taken a proactive approach to sustainability by partnering with Green Energy Analytics. Students learn how to maintain bicycles, ensuring their safety while contributing to a greener environment. Additionally, these initiatives extend to the school's greenhouse and science curriculum, fostering a sense of responsibility for the planet.

Tailored Instruction for Academic Success

ADCS places great emphasis on academic success through tailored instruction. Grade 4-6 students receive targeted tier support in Language Arts and Math aimed at enhancing their proficiency. Furthermore, small group instruction for both Numeracy and Literacy, along with the implementation of Guided Reading Programs, provides personalized learning experiences for students, leading to increased engagement and positive interactions with teachers.

Empowering Teachers and Celebrating Student Success:

The school's staff at ADCS believes in celebrating small wins to encourage student success. By recognizing classroom achievements, such as 4 out of 12 ECS students reaching 100 words and more, and grade 2 students achieving significant progress in sight words, ADCS motivates students to excel in their learning journey. Grade 1 students' accomplishments in mastering number lines and clothesline math are a testament to the effectiveness of innovative pedagogy.

Professional Learning Sessions

The school prioritized professional learning sessions that revolved around key aspects of the new program of studies in Math. Teachers delved into the structure of the program, exploring Organizing Ideas, Learning

Outcomes, Guiding Questions, and KUSPS (Knowledge, Understanding, Skills, Processes). This deeper understanding provided educators with a solid foundation for designing effective and engaging math lessons.

Utilizing Mathology as a Resource

ADCS recognized the significance of Mathology as a valuable numeracy resource for K-3 Math. In dedicated learning sessions, teachers were acquainted with the functionality and practical usage of Mathology. Mathology Videos were incorporated to complement the curriculum and create an interactive learning experience for young learners.

Developing Numeracy School Plan

A collaborative effort was initiated to develop an initial numeracy school plan. This plan served as a strategic roadmap, outlining objectives, resources, and methods to foster a strong numeracy culture throughout the school community.

Modelled Lessons and Introduction to Learning Trajectories

To reinforce best practices, modelled lessons were conducted by the PSD Numeracy Facilitator during her visitations at ADCS. Teachers benefited from witnessing exemplary teaching strategies that encompassed various aspects of numeracy, including Small Group Instruction, Counting Collections, Clothesline Math, Math Talks, Choral Counting, and Early Numeracy Interviews.

Grade-Specific Math Presentations and Sessions

Grade-specific Math presentations and sessions were conducted to address the unique needs of each grade level. This targeted approach allowed educators to tailor instruction to suit the developmental stages and learning styles of their students. Grades 1 through 6 received introductory sessions to familiarize themselves with the math concepts and resources relevant to their respective grade levels.

Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC) - Empowering Jr. High Learners

For Jr. High students, ADCS introduced the Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC) model. This innovative approach aimed to create interactive and thought-provoking learning environments that fostered critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students.

Special Events

To celebrate and preserve Indigenous culture, ADCS hosts special events, such as inviting Elders to share their knowledge during Métis Week and commemorating National Indigenous Languages Day. These events allow students to connect with their heritage, instilling a sense of pride and cultural appreciation. Additionally, the annual Christmas Concert, alongside activities like Spruce Gum Salve Making and Muskrat Camp/Dissections, fosters a close-knit school community that values traditions and wellness.

13. Emergency Response – Fort Chipewyan Wildfire Evacuation (May 30-June 23, 2023)

On May 30, 2023, Athabasca Delta Community School faced an unprecedented challenge when nearby wildfire prompted an evacuation alert for the community of Fort Chipewyan. During the school day, school staff were advised of a potential evacuation. As a safety measure, the school was cancelled and students sent home to ensure both students and staff were prepared for a potential evacuation order.

Late in the day on May 30th, an evacuation order was officially issued, requiring staff and community members to register at community hall and await further directions from the designated incident commander (Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo). The evacuation process commenced during the night of May 30th and continued into the morning of May 31st. Lodging for all staff was provided in Fort McMurray during the duration of the evacuation order.

Student Welfare and Learning

During the evacuation period, school staff stayed in contact with students and families, provided work (print and online). Work packages that included educational toys, puzzles, and games to support their mental well-being were provided for students and families.

Evacuation Order Lifted

The Evacuation Order was officially lifted on June 22nd for re-entry of the general public. On June 21st, three school Division employees returned as essential facilitate the closure of the school for the year. An additional five school staff returned on June 23rd. These staff members inventoried school supplies, prepared classrooms for the next year, distributed report cards, and organized end-of-year events for students.

Evacuation Protocol

The evacuation of Fort Chipewyan was managed through a [Community Emergency Management Plan \(CEMP\)](#) developed by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo in Partnership with the Nations and community. PSD provided bussing throughout the evacuation as a part of this plan.