



MEMORANDUM

June 18, 2024
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent
RESOURCE	Dean Bernard, Division Principal, Northern & Indigenous Relations Leanne Traverse, Facilitator, Indigenous Education
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 1: Division Foundational Statements Board Policy 2: Role of the Board Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	BP 1: Vision, Foundational Statements BP 2: Education Planning and Programming
SUBJECT	INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees upholds the Mission for Parkland School Division (PSD) to “assure supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences and healthy relationships that create opportunities to develop resilience, to gain diversity in perspectives and to achieve enduring success.”

Stakeholders, and in particular the Indigenous communities connected to PSD, gain trust and confidence when we are attending to developing a strong relationship between the Division and the Indigenous communities that results in increased academic achievement and a greater sense of belonging for our students.

Stakeholders also gain trust and confidence when our staff are actively attending to strategies to reduce the First Nation, Métis and Inuit achievement gap, to promote positive relationships with Indigenous students and to promote increased attendance rates.

This report is in support of the Division’s Mission and is provided with respect to the Board’s Annual Work Plan

REPORT SUMMARY

Staff, students, parents and community stakeholder partners are called on to acknowledge the historical significance and contributions of Indigenous People and their cultures within the context of education. The Superintendent recognizes the need for all staff to take appropriate action to bridge and to build our relationships with First Nation communities. This Indigenous Education Report highlights the actions, intentions and shared responsibility of all staff members, that are considered from the dual perspectives of looking back at our successes and challenges, and of looking forward; planning and responding for continual improvement. Our primary responsibilities toward healing are twofold:

- To ensure that all students learn about the history and legacy of residential schools, along with the robust history of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada; and
- To enable all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to achieve success, in a welcoming, supportive and safe school culture, without exception.

This Indigenous Education Report provides an overview of results and recognizes specific events and achievements throughout the year.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

JUNE 2024

Presented to the Board of Trustees, June 18, 2024

Deputy Superintendent Mark Francis

Resource: Dean Bernard, Division Principal, Northern & Indigenous Relations

Leanne Traverse, Facilitator, Indigenous Education

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

BACKGROUND

In alignment with the priority of "Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing," Parkland School Division staff are dedicated to fostering meaningful relationships with the Indigenous communities and partners associated with our division. Recognizing this as a fundamental initiative, our commitment is centred on deepening our understanding of the needs and aspirations of Indigenous students and their families within PSD. This strategic focus is pivotal as we endeavour to establish educational environments where all students thrive. Our efforts are geared towards nurturing an educational atmosphere that not only supports successful learning outcomes but also promotes an authentic sense of belonging and community. By actively engaging with Indigenous communities and incorporating their rich perspectives and ways of knowing, PSD aims to enhance the educational experience and create inclusive, welcoming spaces for every member of our school community.

Within the context of looking forward to success, the 2023-24 Education Plan for Parkland School Division highlighted the enduring priority of "Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing".

PSD is building relationships with Indigenous communities that increase understanding of their experiences, and therefore increase attendance rates, academic completion, and a sense of belonging for Indigenous students. In addition, we need to learn the history of our continent that predates colonialism - we have a responsibility to listen to the stories of the Elders and to increase our understanding beyond what we were taught in school, and to bring those perspectives into our day-to-day work and learning.

Additionally, Element 5: PSD Staff Develop and Apply Indigenous Foundational Knowledge states that:

Staff demonstrate an understanding of Indigenous perspectives and allocate resources in order to support Indigenous students' success and well-being.

Finally, within that element, the strands for development are outlined as follows:

- *School leaders, teachers and support staff develop students' experiences with Indigenous ways of knowing through art, symbols, ceremony, story and song – and therefore raise the visibility of Indigenous culture in schools.*
- *School leaders identify a lead teacher, at each site, to collaborate and directly participate in supporting the needs of Indigenous students.*

- *School leaders and teachers collaborate with Indigenous Elders and community members, and increase their supportive role within the school setting.*
- *School leaders, teachers and support staff develop students' opportunity to experience Indigenous Knowledge Systems in schools, including connection to land, language, Elders and relationships.*

PSD LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With peace, harmony and unity, we honour the land on which PSD resides which now includes Treaty No. 6 and Treaty No. 8 territories.

In Treaty No. 6, we recognize and acknowledge this is traditional and ancestral land, home to many First Nation, Métis and Inuit, including our immediate neighbours from Alexander Cree Nation, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Enoch Cree Nation and Paul First Nation.

Treaty No. 8 is the traditional homeland to Cree, Dene, and Métis. Athabasca Delta Community School serves Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort Chipewyan Métis and the Mikisew Cree First Nation.

We take time to recognize the land as an act of reconciliation and gratitude. We acknowledge Indigenous values, traditional teachings, ways of being, contributions and historical inequalities. We respect all cultures with an open heart and an open mind.

We ALL heal together.

This is the official PSD Land Acknowledgement that is typically done at formal events and is accessible on the PSD website. However, with current teachings from elders and knowledge keepers PSD encourages all employees to personalize their land acknowledgements to reflect their individual relationships with the land, promote inclusivity, and encourage reflection and action in the ongoing process of reconciliation.

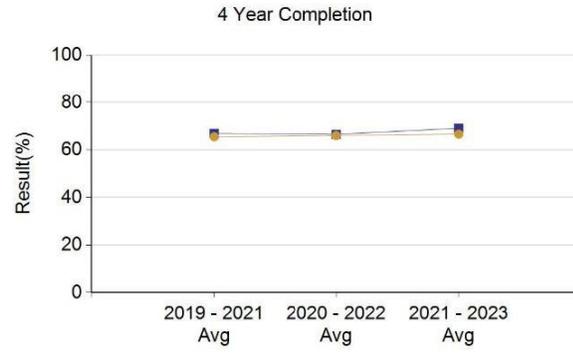
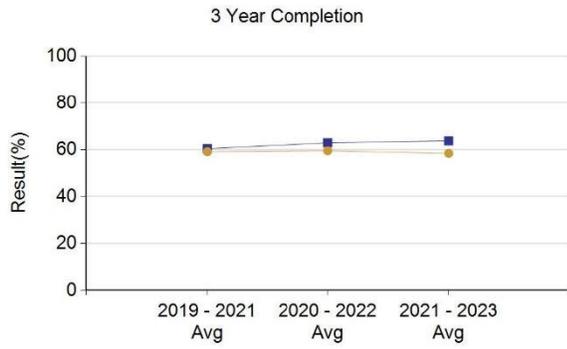
DEMOGRAPHICS & DATA

Indigenous Students Statistics

DEMOGRAPHICS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024
Metis	501 (36.81%)	468 (36.19%)
Status First Nations	362 (26.60%)	302 (23.35%)
Non-Status First Nations	233 (17.12%)	226 (17.47%)
Federally Funded First Nations	237 (17.41%)	270 (20.88%)
Inuit	28 (2.06%)	27 (2.08%)
Total	1361	1293

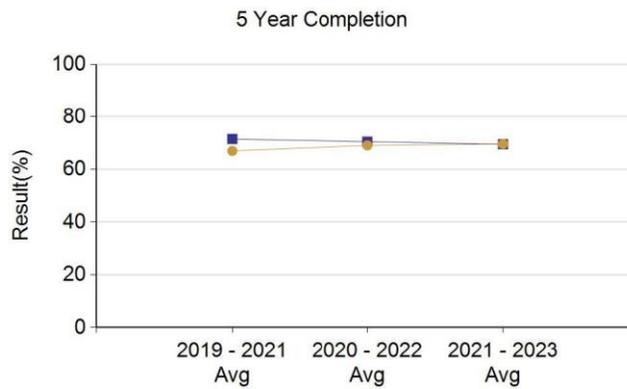
INDIGENOUS STUDENT REPRESENTATION					
School	2023-2024		School	2023-2024	
Athabasca Delta Community School	95.1%		Memorial Composite High School	14.0%	
Blueberry School	4.9%		Ecole Meridian Heights	6.0%	
Brookwood	8.0%		Millgrove	4.8%	
Ecole Broxton Park	6.6%		Muir Lake	6.6%	
Connection For Learning	11.6%		Parkland Village	6.3%	
Copperhaven	4.8%		Prescott Learning Centre	8.9%	
Duffield	27.9 %		Spruce Grove High School	7.8%	
Entwistle	8.6%		Tomahawk	10.5%	
Forest Green	16.6.%		Wabamun	11.9%	
Graminia	4.9%		Westview	11.1%	
Greystone	9.3%		Woodhaven	9.0%	
High Park	8.3%				

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES – 3 YEAR ROLLING AVERAGE												
	Parkland School Division (FNMI)						ALBERTA (FNMI)					
	2019-2021		2020-2022		2021 - 2023		2019-2021		2020-2022		2021 - 2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
3 Year Completion	81	60.4	84	62.9	93	63.7	3845	59.1	3910	59.5	4046	58.4
4 Year Completion	75	66.9	83	66.5	85	69.1	3641	65.5	3778	66.0	3856	66.6
5 Year Completion	81	71.5	75	70.5	83	69.5	3490	67.0	3594	69.1	3740	69.6



■ Parkland School Division (FNMI) ● Alberta (FNMI)

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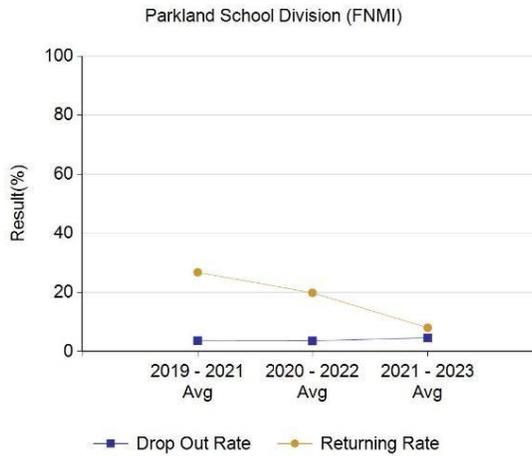
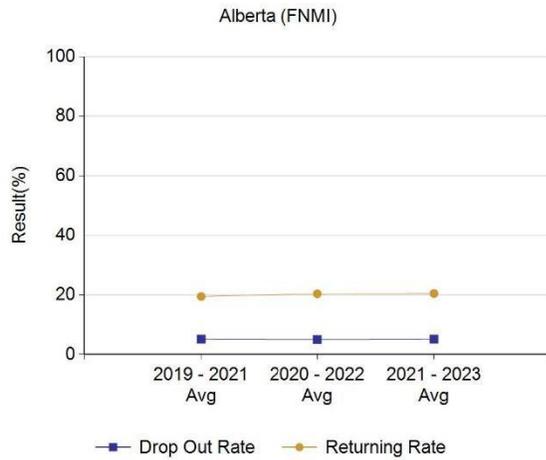
■ Parkland School Division (FNMI) ● Alberta (FNMI)

PSD DROP OUT RATES (FNMI)					
	Total Students	Drop Out Count	Unadjusted Drop Out Rate	Estimated Attrition	Drop Out Rate
2019	290	22	7.6	5.2	5.9
2020	291	11	3.8	3.2	2.7
2021	325	12	3.7	4.0	2.5
2022	360	25	6.9	4.9	5.7
2023	399	28	7.0	6.1	5.6

PSD ANNUAL RETURNING RATE (FNMI)								
	Drop Out Count	Returning Count			Total Returning Count	Unadjusted Returning Rate	Estimated Attrition	Returning Rate
		K-12 Participation	Post-Secondary	Apprenticeship				
2019	17	3	0	0	3	17.6	2.5	20.7
2020	20	7	0	0	7	35.0	4.8	46.2
2021	12	1	0	0	1	8.3	4.4	13.1
2022	12	0	0	0	0	0.0	4.2	0.0
2023	23	1	1	0	2	8.7	4.7	10.9

ALBERTA DROP OUT RATES (FNMI)					
	Total Students	Drop Out Count	Unadjusted Drop Out Rate	Estimated Attrition	Drop Out Rate
2019	184,812	6,724	3.6	1,800.4	2.7
2020	186,228	6,416	3.4	1,686.9	2.6
2021	189,713	5,946	3.1	1,654.8	2.3
2022	191,156	6,258	3.3	1,603.0	2.5
2023	195,341	6,763	3.5	1,948.9	2.5

ALBERTA ANNUAL RETURNING RATE (FNMI)								
	Drop Out Count	Returning Count			Total Returning Count	Unadjusted Returning Rate	Estimated Attrition	Returning Rate
		K-12 Participation	Post-Secondary	Apprenticeship				
2019	6,750	708	112	40	860	12.7	2,028.9	18.2
2020	6,720	752	108	34	894	13.3	1,791.3	18.1
2021	6,408	690	107	24	82`	12.8	1,668.7	17.3
2022	5,940	595	75	45	715	12.0	1,775.0	17.2
2023	6,244	576	116	80	772	12.4	1602.1	16.6



INDIGENOUS STUDENTS SUPPORT FUNDING

Parkland School Division receives provincial funding for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit funding to support our Indigenous students. This table examines how these funds have been spent at the school level by percentage. The majority of the funding has been allocated to personnel, including Indigenous Leads, Liaisons, and Elders, to provide direct support to our Indigenous students. Additionally, a portion of the funding has been used for supplies to enhance their learning, such as Indigenous content books and educational resources.

FNMI FUNDING ALLOCATED TO SCHOOLS *	
	Percentage Spent
Staffing	68.02%
Honourariums / Services	16.47%
Supplies	11.68%
Media Materials	1.66%
Staff Development	1.24%
Subsistence	0.79%
Travel	0.14%

* As of June 1st, 2024

ELDER PROGRAM

The Elder in Residence Program within PSD is designed to support both students and staff in attaining Indigenous foundational knowledge through meaningful engagement with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers. These esteemed individuals are not merely resources; they are custodians of sacred cultural knowledge that is invaluable to those they share it with. The program's purpose is to foster respectful and special relationships with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, thereby honouring and respecting the rich historical, cultural, and spiritual knowledge they impart.

By engaging with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, students and staff benefit from a holistic enrichment of their learning experiences. This engagement strengthens their understanding and appreciation of Indigenous traditions and perspectives. Elders and Knowledge Keepers working with PSD from local First Nations as well as from Parkland County and surrounding communities. The Indigenous Education Facilitator plays a crucial role in this program, ensuring that staff are connected with the appropriate Elders or Knowledge Keepers who can deliver teachings and knowledge relevant to the given context.

NAME	BIOGRAPHY	LOCATIONS	VISITS / EVENTS ATTENDED
Elder Maryann Stepien	Maryann is a Metis Elder originally from Hinton, AB. She has been working with the school division for over three years and is an active member of the Metis community. She enjoys speaking about Metis history and culture and enjoys doing hands-on activities with students (i.e. making Red River carts or dream catchers made from willows in her own backyard).	High Park, Forest Green, Westview, Broxton, Duffield, MCHS, CFE	29
Elder Phillip	Phillip Campiou is a Cree Elder from Driftpile First Nation. He has been working with the school division for over 10 years and spends time in PSD classrooms sharing about smudging, tipi teachings as well as traditional ways of knowing and being.	Gramania, Duffield, SGCHS, Westview, Forest Green, MCHS, CFE, Copperhaven	15
Elder Violet "Kokum" Poitras	Violet Poitras is a Stoney, Cree and Metis Elder from Paul First Nation. She has been working with the school division for over five years and spends much time in PSD classrooms. She enjoys speaking about "being born in a tipi" and her upbringing in traditional ways. She also enjoys speaking to cultural and ceremonial ways of knowing as well as treaty relationships.	Wabamun, MCHS, Duffield, Westview, Forest Green, High Park, Woodhaven, Muir Lake, Millgrove, CFE, Blueberry	50

Currently, we are working on building new relationships with Elders in the community. Bernice Alexis is from Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation and has been working with Prescott Learning Center to bring Indigenous teachings and ways of knowing to staff and the school community. Linda Sinclair is from the Slave Lake area originally and does a lot of work in the Parkland area to share her personal stories and cultural knowledge, specifically spending time with Memorial Composite High School students in an English Language Arts classroom. James Jenka is originally from Fort Chipewyan and works in the Parkland area, both individually with Indigenous youth and with the community to share knowledge and teachings, most recently at Woodhaven Middle School.

NOTABLE ELDER/ KNOWLEDGE KEEPER EVENTS

Citizenship and Character Development

Ecole Meridian Heights School developed a year-long plan to weave ideas surrounding the Seven Sacred Teachings into a whole school project. They invited Knowledge Keeper Char Tootoosis into the school to share knowledge and teachings about smudging and about the Seven Sacred Teachings, which was important to their whole school focus on character education. Each month, the school came together to share what they had learned about one of the teachings in a creative and engaging way.

Cree Perspective from an Elder

Copperhaven School invited Elder Phillip Campiou in to share knowledge on the Cree perspective of the Seven Sacred Teachings. As a part of their lessons on citizenship within the school, the teachings were meaningful to students in thinking about their role as school citizens, community members and caretakers of the land.

Fostering a Sense of Belonging

Les Worthington, principal at Wabamun School worked with parents and Wabamun community member, Elder Violet and Henry Bird, to come up with an Indigenous-inspired design for an alternate school design for their jerseys. Les and Henry wanted to honour and acknowledge the history of Wabamun (pronounced wop-moon), which is a Cree and Stoney word meaning “mirror” and “looking glass”, respectively. Henry shared stories with Les about his thoughts, ideas and experiences in Wabamun and came back to him with a beautiful design to honour the historical and current Indigenous presence in this area.

Harvesting the Healing Garden

Elder Phillip Campiou and Forest Green staff and students harvested plants in the fall of 2023. Elder Phillip shared teachings and knowledge on the plants and the tobacco seeds were kept in order to be planted in the spring. The cycle continued with Elders Phillip Campiou and Violet Poitras joining Forest Green staff and students on June 5th to plant this year’s seeds and plants.

Metis Knowledge and Culture at High Park

Elder Maryann Stepien shared knowledge about the Red River Cart at High Park School and students had the opportunity to create their carts. Students had a chance to hear stories and learn and then participate in hands-on activities with Elder Maryann there to support the Indigenous Atlas of Canada

Pipe Ceremony

The pipe ceremony, held during the September equinox, honoured our relationships with Indigenous partners. Trustees, Elders, Executives, Principals, and the Northern & Indigenous Relations team participated in this event to commence the school year “in a good way,” respecting both the Indigenous calendar and the academic calendar. This ceremony underscored our commitment to fostering strong, respectful partnerships with Indigenous communities.



Pipe Ceremony on the Equinox at Centre for Education

Smudge Teachings and Circle

Elder Phillip Campiou visited Spruce Grove Composite High School, Muir Lake School and Westview School to share smudge teachings with students who showed leadership and oskapewis (helper) qualities within their respective schools. These schools had intentions of incorporating daily smudge practice within their daily and weekly school routines. Elder Violet Poitras visited Forest Green School and Westview School to share smudge teachings and knowledge about sacred medicines.

HONOURING INDIGENOUS CULTURE

Francofête Week

As part of this important week that celebrates and honours French culture, Ecole Meridian Heights School invited Metis jigger Ally Perry to share Metis culture and jigging. She shared, performed and then taught the students how to do a fancy step.

Indigenous Cultural Celebration

The Northern and Indigenous Relations team, Memorial Composite High School, Spruce Grove High School and Connections for Learning worked together to plan and host the annual Indigenous Cultural Celebration to recognize and celebrate Indigenous graduates in the division. This community event included community powwow dancers, Metis jiggers and fiddlers, and a community feast, and was co-emceed by an Indigenous student from MCHS. It is a celebration of academic accomplishments and a bringing together of students, schools and communities.

Indigenous Holiday Market

In December 2023, MCHS hosted an Indigenous Holiday Market where Indigenous artisans and vendors were able to showcase and sell their work. 25 vendors participated from various communities, including: Paul First Nation, Maskwacis, Calling Lake, Alexander Cree Nation and Edmonton. The event was well attended by the Parkland community and vendors were pleased by the amount of support that they received during the Christmas season. Vendors were inquiring about the Indigenous Holiday Market becoming an annual event for MCHS. Staff and students from MCHS, including Dianne Jewell and Rhonda Harbert volunteered their time and were integral to the success of the day. Students and coordinators from the Paul First Nation Youth HUB ran a concession to raise funds for the Paul First Nation Youth Mentorship Program. These funds will also be used to help students with extracurricular activities both within and outside of the community.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

MCHS hosted a whole-school event with Elder Violet Poitras doing an opening prayer. There were between 10-12 dancers from Paul First Nation who introduced themselves and explained who they were honouring that day and why it was important for them to dance. ADCS held a whole-school event where they honoured the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by rehearsing and performing "Spirit of the Child". Forest Green took their students on a mindful walk to honour and think about the experiences of students who attended residential schools.

Remembrance Day / National Indigenous Veterans Day

MCHS honoured National Indigenous Veterans Day in their torch lessons as well as in their inclusion of the laying of a wreath for Indigenous veterans during their whole-school gathering.

National Indigenous Peoples Month / Day

Trish Foley, Indigenous Liaison at Westview School, connected and engaged with performers from Paul First Nation for their annual spring mini powwow. Donnie Rain, MC and dancer, shared knowledge about the drum as well as each style of dance. This event was attended by all staff and students as well as many community members and was an amazing opportunity for the sharing of cultural knowledge and celebration.

MMIP Sharing and Walk

In leading up to the National Day for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People, Facilitator Traverse presented to all classes individually at MCHS about the importance of learning about and recognizing Missing and Murdered Indigenous People including a screening of part of the film “Through the Storm” created by Native Counselling Services of Alberta. On May 3rd, roughly 600 MCHS students participated in “Walk the Talk for MMIP” which included a smudge, passing out of red ribbons and a walking route through Westerra and High Park marked by information about MMIP.

Pow Wow Practice and Community Building

In April/May of 2024, Chris Shaw and the team at Prescott Learning Centre partnered with Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Centre and local community members to share knowledge about pow wow dancing and drumming with the school community. This was a way to share cultural knowledge, be physically active and build community.

Ribbon Skirt Making and Collaboration

MCHS, Westview School and St. Peter the Apostle School (Evergreen Catholic School Division) collaborated to bring students together for a ribbon skirt making session. Barb Scott, local Elder and Vice President at Skydancer Indigenous Cultural Centre shared teachings about the ribbon skirt and helped students make and complete their projects. This was a great example of community and cross-division collaboration in honouring Indigenous culture.

NEWSLETTER - WEAVING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING

This year the Northern and Indigenous Relations team piloted *Weaving Indigenous Ways of Knowing* a monthly newsletter. This newsletter promotes indigenous knowledge of ways of knowing to all staff members. Including:

- Informing staff about important Indigenous dates for the month
- Provide examples and links to classroom resources
- Share professional development opportunities accessible to all staff
- Celebrate Indigenous school-based work that schools have implemented
- Promote Indigenous events that staff can participate in locally
- Connecting staff with local community partners



Sample pages from the May 2024 newsletter

KINSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Kinship Advisory Committee brings together Indigenous parents, guardians, families, Elders and PSD staff to highlight voices and opinions on current and future work. The Kinship Advisory Committee gathered four times throughout the year and shared in order to inform on the best ways to work together and move forward with Indigenous education in the division.

VISION AND PURPOSE

Our Vision

To give guidance and support as Parkland School Division braids together the strands of *Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Indigenous Learners Support, and Creating and Building Community Kinship* to enhance the educational environment that honours Indigenous culture, perspectives and traditions so all students can strive for excellence in education.

Our Objectives

We are committed to being the dedicated voices and unwavering advocates for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students within Parkland School Division, as Parkland School Division continues on its path towards Truth and Reconciliation. Our purpose is to advise on and guide PSD's strands of Indigenous education for the advocacy of Indigenous voices and communities as well as for the benefit of all learners in the school division.

In alignment with these values and objectives, the Indigenous Kinship Advisory Committee commits to serving as a bridge between Indigenous communities and the educational system, promoting equity, respect, and a brighter future for all.



A message from the Kinship Advisory Committee is that they see the value of this committee and as Crystal Wood stated
 “I finally feel that a (Indigenous) community voice is heard”

RESOURCES AND CURRICULUM SUPPORT

Kindness Week at Millgrove

The principals, staff and students at Millgrove Elementary School had the opportunity to engage in a Kindness Storytelling Series with Kookum Violet Poitras and Facilitator Traverse. Students listened to “When We Are Kind” and “The Strength of His Hair”, received teachings about kindness from Kookum Violet and had the opportunity to ask questions. This series was a great opportunity for teachings from a local Elder, relationship-building and community.

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada

With the purchase of an Indigenous Atlas of Canada kit, PSD was able to support teachers in weaving Indigenous history and ways of knowing into their classroom lessons. Teachers were offered a PD session by Northern and Indigenous Relations Principal Dean Bernard and Facilitator Traverse prior to their classroom use in order to be introduced to the atlas and the resources available for their subject area and grade level. Notably, the atlas was used in a community sharing event at Copperhaven School where families could interact with the atlas.

Indigenous Games Kit

In September, PSD Wellness Facilitator Cathy Traynor facilitated a session with Lyndon Suntjens leading teachers in sharing knowledge and interacting with the Indigenous Games Kit. Teachers gained foundational knowledge in Indigenous games and had the kit available to them throughout the year to use in their classrooms.



Lyndon Suntjens instructing on how to play hand games at Muir Lake

Dual Credit Programs/ Promotions of Employment with PSD

The Northern and Indigenous Relationship and Human Resources Team promoted the dual credit programs available through PSD and how these programs can lead to employment opportunities with PSD. This promotion included targeted presentations to Indigenous students in the classroom and a booth at the Indigenous Post-Secondary Event at MCHS.

ADCS Leadership Field Trip to Parkland South

ADCS students visited Parkland South in the first step in bridging relationships between northern and southern students as well as to learn about new opportunities. During their high school visits to Memorial Composite High School, Spruce Grove Composite High School, Greystone Centennial Middle School, Center for Education, and Amiskwaciy Academy, the students toured facilities, observed core and complementary programming, experienced student life on campus, and explored extra-curricular options. Additionally, they played exhibition basketball games, observed athletic tournament play, and made connections with the sports and athletic programs within the Parkland School Division. This trip was designed to be a comprehensive learning experience that benefited the student leaders and athletes of ADCS.

MCHS INDIGENOUS BASED PROGRAM

At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, the Indigenous-Based Program (IBP) Pilot at Memorial Composite High School (MCHS) was evaluated. Based on feedback from students, families, and staff, the team approved the program's continuation for the 2023-2024 school year. The evaluation identified strengths and areas for improvement in supporting Indigenous students at MCHS. This inclusive space provides academic support for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students across all courses, not just those scheduled under the IBP. Here is a list of changes implemented as the program enters its second year:

- The naming of the learning space: In June of 2023, Elder Kookum Violet and guest Matt Adam joined about 20 students in the Indigenous-Based Program Room to gift names for the space, which is Iyiniw Kiskinwahamatowin/Weechasta Wuthpiwchukehbi (ee noo x no **ma** toe win, wee chasta wuth **bey** oh cha **kay** bee), *where people of all nations teach and learn*. This is formerly the Indigenous-Based Program Room.
- Space set up: At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, there were new tables and chairs put in the space to allow for more collaboration and openness.
- Food and nutrition support: The program receives nutritional support from the Breakfast Club of Canada and from MCHS to feed students in the space.
- Cultural support from PFN: During the 2023-2024 school year, youth mentors from PFN shared cultural support and academic mentorship to students in the program to build confidence and community.
- Programming offered: Along with module-based courses offered through CFL, the program offered Locally Developed Courses that were based on cultural and student interests including beading, sewing and fitness.

The inaugural semester proved successful with respect to student feelings of safety and belonging as well as academic success and credit allocation. Below is the data from semester two of the 2022-2023 school year.

MCHS INDIGENOUS PROGRAM STATISTICS		
	2021 -2022 Full Year	2022-2023
	Students randomly selected for support	Intentional Program Placement
Total Students	13	17
Potential Credits / Student	36	41
Average Credit / Student	29	33
Average % of Credits Earned	77%	81%
Potential Credit for Full IBP Courses		158
Earned Credit for Full IBP Course		138 (87%)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS	
How to use the Indigenous Atlas of Canada in a School	This professional development session introduced educators to use the map with 16 different topics and accompanying resources. Focusing on the topic of climate change, the session highlighted various First Nations, Metis, and Inuit perspectives on the subject. The events began with a smudging ceremony and explored how the physical presentation of maps can influence students' worldviews. Emphasis was placed on the importance of exploring different perspectives to enrich curriculum content.
Indigenous Enhancement of Math and Science Resources	In this professional development session, teachers explored various resources to enhance their instruction in math, science, ELA, and social studies, with a particular focus on outdoor-based learning. The session provided websites and articles demonstrating how to seamlessly integrate Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being into the curriculum. An overview and navigation of Alberta Education’s Walking Together website were included. Book recommendations and Google Slide resources from last year showcased how the local trail system and the Pembina River can be used for educational purposes. This event included a walk along the river as an example of the land being a viable resource for enhancing education
Medicine River Walk	In this professional development session, participants embarked on the Pembina Trail and River Walk, beginning with an excerpt from "Embers" by Richard Wagamese. The walk aimed to help participants recognize our interconnectedness with all elements of Mother Earth and understand the impact of our actions. Along the trail, specific plants were identified for their medicinal qualities, and observations were made about the trees, sounds, and absence of birds. Time by the river included a smudge ceremony and the use of mindfulness cards for setting intentions. The sharing of a Blackfoot story by Elder Harley Bastien on photosynthesis, and the history of the two towns along the river and the construction of the railway system were discussed, highlighting their effects on the environment. Participants learned about the importance of place, the practice of presenting protocol (tobacco), and explaining their visit's intention. Each staff member offered tobacco to the land or water and reflected quietly. The session concluded with a sharing circle.

<p>Karen West's - Indigenous Scientific Knowledge</p>	<p>In this professional development session, "Science through an Indigenous Lens," participants explored how to approach science education using Indigenous Ways of Knowing. Emphasizing the concept of thinking through place, the session guided participants in integrating Indigenous wisdom that is deeply interconnected with the land. Attendees learned the importance of land-based learning and gained practical insights into incorporating these perspectives into their teaching practices.</p>
<p>Indspire National Gathering</p>	<p>The Indspire National Gathering for Educators offers a comprehensive professional development experience, showcasing innovative approaches to Indigenous education. Participants explored diverse perspectives on key educational topics through Indigenous keynote speakers and breakout sessions. The gathering emphasizes the importance of incorporating Indigenous Ways of Knowing into the curriculum, offering sessions on best practices, resources, and strategies. Educators will engage in meaningful discussions and workshops, learning how to create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that honour Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.</p>
<p>CASS Indigenous Education Gathering</p>	<p>This Indigenous Education Gathering was aimed at “an increase in understanding how to apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students, an increase in capacity building to meet the learning needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students; an increase in understanding how to engage and collaborate with First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, Elders, communities and organizations; and an increase in awareness and understanding of how to implement and lead practices that support reconciliation within our schools, school systems, and communities”.</p>
<p>Indigenous Games</p>	<p>The professional development session at Muir Lake, led by Lyndon Suntjens from Amiskwaciy Academy in Edmonton, focused on a variety of Indigenous games. Participants received detailed background information and cultural and historical context for each game, and had the opportunity to play them, both in an outdoor and indoor education lens. The session included a discussion and Q&A period, exploring how to integrate these experiences into Active Living within the comprehensive school health framework and Physical Education and Wellness curriculum content.</p>
<p>Smudge Teachings</p>	<p>Smudge teaching sessions were offered to staff at various locations, led by Elder Violet and Elder Philip, who provided insights into the significance of this ceremony for the Stoney and Cree people. Additionally, Elder Bernice Alexis conducted a session for Prescott staff, explaining the Alexis band's perspective on smudging. The session included a sharing circle to discuss the cultural views of the Alexis First Nation, allowing staff to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of these practices.</p>
<p>Cultural Practices and Indigenous Ways of Knowing in the Counselling Space</p>	<p>This professional development session focuses on supporting Indigenous students through a holistic approach for counsellors. The Northern and Indigenous Relations team will engage with counsellors in an open question-and-answer format, enhancing School Counsellor's ability to deepen their knowledge and incorporate appropriate cultural practices to best support Indigenous clients</p>

TEACHERS TAKE CARE SERIES - COLLABORATIVE COHORT PROJECT

In this 5-week professional development series, 19 school staff engaged in wellness and cultural connections that support their holistic well-being, guided by Indigenous perspectives. The journey from head to heart provided insights into emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual domains. Each session featured experiential and embodied learning with Elders, facilitators, or special guests, inspired by the book "Teachers, Take Care: A Guide to Wellbeing and Workplace Wellness for Educators."

The series began with a session at Elder Bob Cardinal's teaching lodge at Enoch Cree Nation, featuring Dr. Dwayne Donald. Participants engaged in deep listening and reflection within a circle gathering. Subsequent sessions at Greystone Centennial Middle School included smudge teachings, gratitude practices, self-care through Metis art with Angela Hall, sharing circles with Elder Kokum Violet, and physical wellness activities with Michelle Nievadomy from Iskwew Health, all emphasizing Indigenous Ways of Knowing. This series aims to nourish and empower school staff, fostering a deep connection to self and community. This was a collaborative project with student support services.



LOOKING FORWARD 2024-2025

Parkland Indigenous Ways of Knowing Podcast

An Indigenous Ways of Knowing Podcast will be fully developed and distributed to help all staff to gain foundational knowledge of Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Perspectives. This Podcast will have perspectives by staff members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and parents to help PSD gain more knowledge about indigenous ways of knowing for the benefit of our students.

Cohort Group

We are looking to bring together Indigenous liaisons/leads in order to support and enhance foundational Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. We will be providing enriched experiences for staff who are looking to connect in deeper ways (i.e. ceremonial gatherings, land-based learning). With this, we hope to build deeper community connections and collaboration across the school division among staff.

Language Program

Outlining/ Researching and Designing a blueprint for Indigenous Language programs for future use at PSD. Creating a model, and gathering our medicine, to help heal the language to help students reclaim their language. While we do have a language program at Athabasca Delta Community School in both Cree and Dene we will begin the process of creating a model for a sustainable language program in the southern PSD.