



Teaching to Walk in Two Worlds

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Fort McMurray Catholic School District
Picture borrowed from South Slave Divisional Education Council

Introduction

- School district info
 - 11 schools 9 liaisons
 - Each school has a cultural haven for students
- Investment in Human Resources

Getting Kids to School

- Bev – sharing picking a child up
- Alarm clocks
- Older students guiding younger siblings
- Going to see kids in activities
- Whatever it takes

Communication/Connections

- Newsletter corner
- Website – culturally inclined
- Bulletin boards
- Social media
- Community support – Metis Fest, Elders Christmas party, NAD, RARA

Hygiene

- Nurse visit with packs for students
- Braiding hair
- Having supplies for hygiene
- Washer and dryer
- Brushing teeth
- Students who look good feel good

Home Visits

- Going to homes to help create healthy snacks
- Organization
- Attendance/punctuality
- Some liaisons share personal cell phone number
- Paperwork – helping with passports, school registration

School Gatherings

- Parent volunteers
- Bannock days – with parent-teacher interviews
- Feasts – held at every school
- Arctic Winter Games
- Meet n Greet

Providing for Needs

- Food – hungry students can't learn
- School supplies
- Clothing
- Rest –provide a quiet space when needed

Cultural Connections

- Sweetgrass - smudging
- Dream catchers
- Recognition of indigenous lands
- Full Circle Program – after school program sponsored by Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Friendship center – tutoring and cultural teaching
- Orange T-shirt day

Teaching Students

Go into classes and do curricular support
Pull out groups
7 Teachings and reading support - literacy
Bring culture in – wampum belts, drum kits
Cultural performers

Teaching Resources 4

- Posters with counting
- “When I grow up” posters
- Aboriginal borders in classrooms
- O Canada in Cree and Dene in every classroom

Teaching Adults

- Aboriginal Awareness Training – Boucher Group pays for training for all staff
- Building a relationship with teachers – trust – asking for help
- PD Day leaders – liaisons teach culture
- Voice for our culture
- Martin Brokenleg presentation
- Industry support

Recognition

- TCOA – Traditional Celebration of Achievement. Grade 12 students who are graduating are celebrated
- RARA – Regional Aboriginal Recognition Awards. Yearly awards
- 7 Teaching Certificates

Conclusion

- Alberta Education: it is our job to share FNMI cultures, histories and traditions with all Alberta students.
- Our liaisons are our strength. They meet human needs first and then support cultural teaching for both students and adults.
- Our silver bullet for success is our liaisons. That early connection keeps students in school.

Thank you

- Title picture borrowed from South Slave Divisional Education Council
