



School District 19 Aboriginal Education Newsletter Spring 2016

We respectfully honour and acknowledge Aboriginal people, recognising that our students come to us with Aboriginal ancestry from a variety of ancient homelands.

We would like to acknowledge and honour the four nations on whose traditional land we live and learn: the Sinixt, the Ktunaxa, the Secwepmec, and the Syilx.

Welcome to the Spring 2016 Aboriginal Education Newsletter! There are many exciting things happening in Aboriginal Education in the District. We hope you enjoy reading all about them.

A message from the District Principal, Ariel McDowell:

Happy Spring, everyone!

Since our Winter newsletter, there have been many great things happening in Aboriginal Education in the district, and in the community.

Basket Making

In April we welcomed two basket makers from the Sinixt nation, Nancy Michel and Joyce Kohler. Nancy and Joyce taught ten students and staff members how to create beautiful cedar baskets, and even how to harvest the cedar from a nearby tree. You can see the tree we harvested the bark from, just outside the RSS community entrance.

Enhancing Aboriginal Education in Revelstoke

We are very close to the signing ceremony for our 5-year plan, called the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement. Many of you have offered your ideas and suggestions to make sure that our goals are reflective of our community and our students. In this way, we know that the work that we do in the coming years will be relevant and will make a positive change.

School District No. 19
(Revelstoke)

**ABORIGINAL
ENHANCEMENT
AGREEMENT
2016-2021**

SIGNING CEREMONY

*You are invited to witness the
signing of Revelstoke's second
Aboriginal Enhancement
Agreement*

*Thursday, May 26th
Revelstoke Secondary
School atrium
6-8pm*

R.S.V.P. BY APRIL 26TH TO SUSIE
SALON, S.D. 19 BOARD OFFICE
(250) 837-2101

Carousel of Nations

Aboriginal students were on hand again this year at the annual Carousel of Nations. The event was lively and very well-attended. Food from around the world was served, dances and

"We envision Aboriginal students who are successful and confident; have pride in their cultural heritage, unique gifts, strengths and abilities. We are committed to a community that acknowledges honours and respects, the diverse culture of our Aboriginal students, families and Elders." (from the S.D. #19 Enhancement Agreement)

costumes were on display, including a performance by the Metis Dancers of Golden. Cory Derikson, and of the Okanagan nation, danced and sang. The Aboriginal Education table served delicious food, served by Aboriginal Student Assistant Lisa Moore, her mom Yvonne Moore, and RSS students.

Aboriginal Friendship Society of Revelstoke

The Aboriginal Friendship Society of Revelstoke was the grateful recipient of a Columbia Basin Trust grant to continue to fund the position of a community liaison person. It has been wonderful to see the work of the Friendship Society grow over the past year. If you are interested in attending a meeting or finding out about some of the upcoming events of the Society, check out their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/490487617771929/>

Ready, Set, Learn

Three-year olds and their parents filled the Begbie View gymnasium on March 9th, where they visited stations from all kinds of service providers in Revelstoke. At each station, the children played activities, got a stamp in their passport, and received a take-away gift. This



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year, Karin O’Neill, the Elementary Aboriginal Student Assistant, hosted a very popular Aboriginal Education table. Children read beautiful Aboriginal-themed books, played with Coastal-inspired stuffed animals, and got to take home a special talking stick that they made. This is the second year we have had an Aboriginal station at the Ready, Set, Learn fair, and it is a tradition we will continue!

Kindergarten Registration

Registration for September 2016 started the week of February 22nd, but if you know of a child born in 2011, please encourage their family to go to their neighbourhood school and register. Parents or guardians need to bring in the child’s birth certificate and BC Care Card when they register.

Aboriginal Self-Identification

A really important thing to know about Aboriginal Education in B.C. is that it is based on self-identification by the student’s family. Aboriginal students do not have to have status or blood quantum. It is sufficient if the parent or guardian of a student self-identifies them as Aboriginal. In our District, we have children who are status and non-status, Inuit, and Metis. We have children and families who know details of their Aboriginal ancestry through generations, and we also have children and families who do not know the details of their ancestry. For many families in the past, Aboriginal identity was not celebrated or recognized for fear of racism or discrimination. One of the important roles that our Aboriginal Student Assistants have, is working with students and families to help connect them to their heritage. To self-identify, there is a School District form that needs to be signed each year.

Aboriginal Books and Resources

We have a large selection of up-to-date and exciting novels, resource books, recipe books, leveled readers, and picture books in our District schools. If you are interested to see the titles

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ment Agreement)

we have, please contact Ariel McDowell at 837-4744. Parents can borrow these items too.

Aboriginal Professional Development for Teachers

On the last Pro-D Day, teachers in School District No. 19 had the chance to spend a day learning about the local Aboriginal history, and about Aboriginal approaches to teaching and learning. More than half of the teachers in the School District attended.

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A Message from Lisa Moore, Aboriginal Student Assistant at R.S.S.

Spring has brought new opportunities – the warm weather has allowed us to take the class outside, sometimes for walks and sometimes to do classwork. We’ve had a visitor from Okanagan College in Salmon Arm to talk about the support offered for students transitioning to post-secondary and to a larger community. We had the wonderful opportunity to take in a Cedar Bark Basket workshop given by two Sinixt elders. Seven students and three staff made a small basket and also observed harvesting of cedar bark.

We’re very happy that one of our students has completed the Aboriginal Art and Culture course with seven weeks of school left! She has written a proposal for a two-credit course on traditional beadwork and moccasins. It is good to see students able to be so conscientious and motivated.

We will be having our school Wellness Fair this week. Students from grades 8, 10, and 12 tour booths from various service providers to learn how to lead healthy live. Aboriginal Education will have a booth again, with emphasis on the Medicine Wheel and how that can help us have balanced and healthy lives.

We are looking forward to our Enhancement Agreement signing ceremony soon, and then it will be the final push to finish up everything for the end of the school year. We really do have so much to be thankful for!

Lisa Moore

Aboriginal Education Support Worker SD 19 (Revelstoke)

lmoore@sd19.bc.ca

250-837-2173

*"We create balance and harmony by treating one another with respect."
- Metis Health and Healing*

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A Message of introduction from Karin O'Neill, Elementary Aboriginal Student Assistant

Dear Parents and Community members of Revelstoke,

My name is Karin O'Neill and I am filling in for Sherelle Anderson as the Primary Aboriginal

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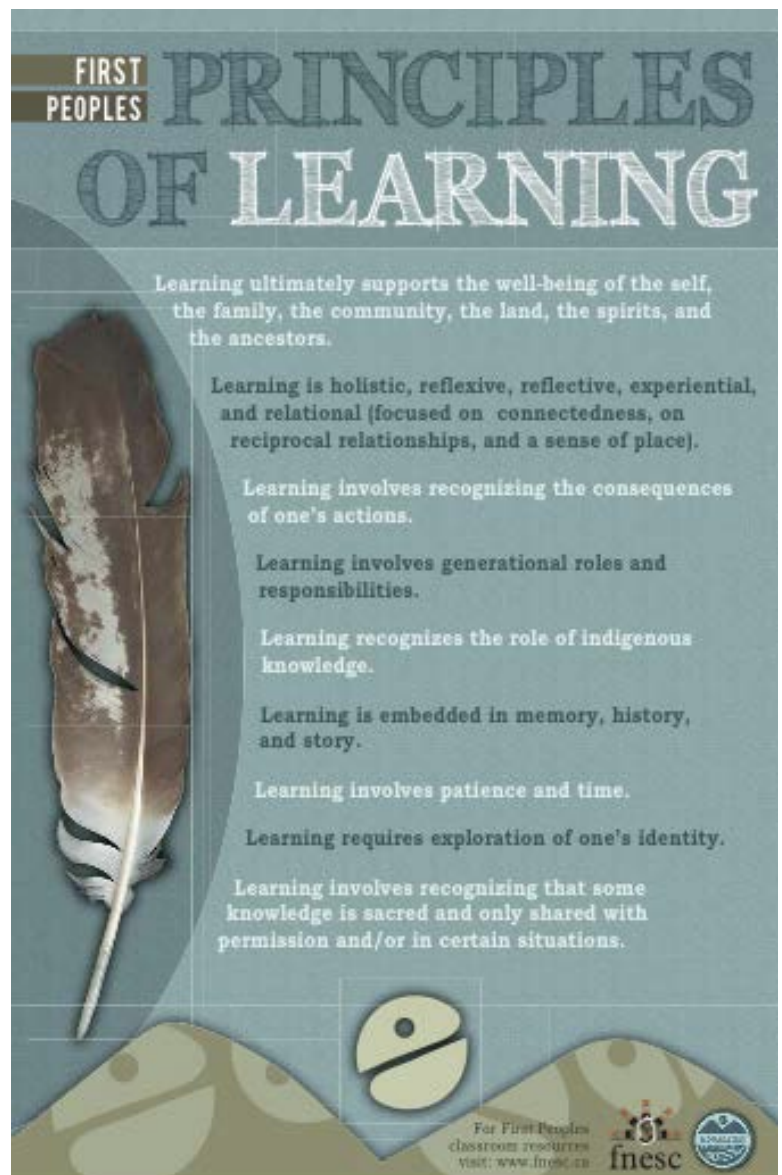
Education Support. I was born and raised in Revelstoke, and have been an Education Assistant in the district for the last 12 years. Since I started this spring, the kids and I have been learning about aboriginal culture in many exciting ways. We have been exploring and learning this spring with seasonal medicine wheels, and out door plant and tree walks. In April, so of us were lucky enough to attend a cedar basket weaving workshop, presented by Joyce and Nancy, of the Sinixt Nation, at R.S.S. Also Primary Aboriginal Education has paired up with the Secondary Aboriginal class for aboriginal leadership programs. At Begbie View, the R.S.S. students presented a local aboriginal legend through drama, to two primary classes. It was very well done and our students really enjoyed it. This May, the R.S.S. students will do a workshop on history, culture, and construction of birch bark baskets, in both primary and intermediate classes. Also this May, classes will

be going on a field trip for the salmon release and Kingfisher Hatchery. They have an amazing aboriginal exhibit there as well as an actual pit house. Intermediate Aboriginal students have been learning about, and carving decorative hunting spears. The lunch time aboriginal program has been busy learning about aboriginal culture through arts and craft. We have also been making give away gifts for our upcoming Enhancement Agreement Signing at RSS on May 26th .

I invite each of you to contact me should you like to participate in any way. We would love to have your help and continued support.

All my best, Karin O'Neill
Elementary Aboriginal Support Worker

Please join us at our next
meeting,
June 9th , 2016 from 4-5pm
At the School District Office
501 – 11th Street



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