



Office of The Superintendents

Jim McCuaig Education Centre
2135 Sills Street Thunder Bay ON P7E 5T2
Telephone (807) 625-5158 Fax (807) 623-7848

**LAKEHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
URBAN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROJECT**

FINAL REPORTS 2010

Your Children Our Students The Future
www.lakeheadschoools.ca

Lakehead District School Board

**LAKEHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
URBAN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROJECT**

FINAL REPORTS 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Aboriginal Curriculum Modules Final Report 2008-2010	1-4
Aboriginal Navigator Final Report 2008-2010	5-8
Appropriate Aboriginal Content, Resources & Materials Final Report 2008-2010	9-12
Aboriginal Role Models & Cultural Programming Final Report 2008-2010	13-15
Aboriginal Transitions Final Report 2008-2010	16-19
Alternative Education Program Final Report 2008-2010	20-22
Family Connections Final Report 2008-2010	23-26
Later Literacy Program Final Report 2008-2010	27-34
Professional Development Final Report 2008-2010	35-47
Welcoming Environment Final Report 2008-2010	48-60
Community Connections Final Report 2008-2010	61-63
Aboriginal Education Co-ordinator Final Report 2008-2010	64-67
Elder Supports Final Report 2008-2010	68-73
Aboriginal Mentorship Final Report 2008-2010	74-79
Aboriginal Parent/Guardian Advocacy Final Report 2008-2010	80-83

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

ABORIGINAL CURRICULUM MODULES
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

ABORIGINAL CURRICULUM MODULES OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Build capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices.

Build capacity to support identity building including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures.

Reduce gaps in student achievement.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #1 High Level of Student Achievement – Strategy 1.1

Indicators of Success:

Retrieve internal feedback/pre and post survey for teachers to complete.

Explore strategies to engage Aboriginal students (which could improve attendance and course completion).

Provide learning opportunities to increase appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal cultures and traditions.

Provide support and information to increase the comfort level for teachers to teach sensitive topics.

Encourage equity and respect for diversity.

Budget

Action Plan / Implementation:

The development of the six-day Grade 10 Civics module and integration of educational opportunities to improve the knowledge about the cultures and histories of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples and our shared Canadian history is beneficial in the learning process for staff and students.

The Grade 10 Civics module information and lessons allowed students to develop a rich awareness of the diversity in Aboriginal peoples, and to understand the relationship between the First Nation, Metis and Inuit people and the non-Aboriginal people, historically and currently.

The lead in this development and creation of the Grade 10 Civics Module was done so by one of the Board's Civics teachers, Andrew Foulds.

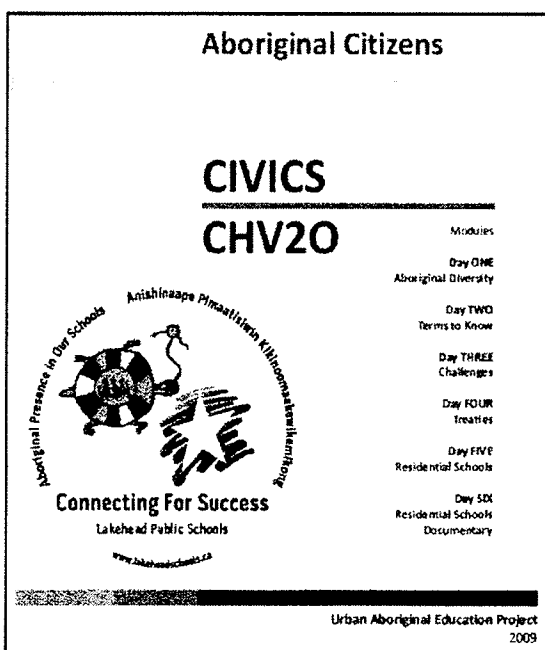
Project Coordinator / Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher:

The following are duties that were executed to administer the outcome and goals of the Appropriate Aboriginal Resources and Materials initiatives and goals:

- Facilitated and presented professional development sessions for all grade 10 Civics teachers.
- Regularly reviewed Civics Module components for appropriateness and relevance.
- Coordinated the resources and supports for Aboriginal Student Success.
- Built capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Built capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices through professional development and having access to an Aboriginal expert panel.
- Supported the implementation of student achievement initiatives to improve Aboriginal students' literacy and numeracy skills, building capacity for effective instructional, assessment and evaluation practices, delivering professional

development "at the elbow" for teachers and support staff, and assisting with the implementation of Board and Ministry initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal Education.

- Worked collaboratively with the Lead Teacher and the members of Aboriginal academia (relative to Aboriginal historical and political content).



**The Grade 10 Civics Module:
Aboriginal Citizens in Canada**

There are six parts to the module which can be delivered in six days.

- Part 1 – Aboriginal Diversity
- Part 2 – Terms to Know
- Part 3 – Aboriginal Rights
- Part 4 – Challenges
- Part 5 – Treaties
- Part 6 – Residential Schools

The topics selected reflect the curriculum expectations and provide detailed information on each.

Expert opinion in providing accurate Aboriginal historical and current issues was sought.

Module Texts / Additional Resources

The resources that were utilized in the development and delivery of the module include the following, but are not limited to:

- Civics Today (J. Watt, et al, Irwin Publishing Ltd, 2000)
- Civics Now (D.Gordon, et al, Thomson/Nelson Publishing, 2006)
- Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools Guide (Lakehead Public School Board, 2007)
*All schools should have copies of this.
- Indian Residential Schools in Ontario. Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, Thunder Bay, ON (2005)
- Stories from Residential School. Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, Thunder Bay, ON (2005)
- DVD and Handbook Where are the Children? The Healing Legacy of the Residential Schools (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2006) * *You can order additional copies for free from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.
- Aboriginals Off-Reserve: Strangers in Their Own Land (Article s by TVO.org) *
Questions for students included in handout.

Civics teachers that attended and participated in the professional development sessions were provided with a hard and soft copy of the entire module.

Professional Development

Professional Development

Professional development provided teachers with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the contents within the module and to provide teachers an

opportunity to ask questions to the expert panel and provide their professional feedback to the module components and delivery.

These sessions also provided teachers with an opportunity to review the resources and content and to work collaboratively with other Civics teachers to develop appropriate lessons geared to the module contents.

Conclusion

This project initiative was valuable for teachers by providing for them accurate and reliable Aboriginal content, resources and materials that they can utilize and integrate in the schools/classrooms. The professional development component was intrinsic to increase the comfort level for teachers to embed/teach Aboriginal content in the curriculum. Through teacher's feedback from the professional development sessions, teachers have informed that there are challenges to presenting sensitive issues, but are challenged to teaching the module contents.

The content and having access to Aboriginal resource personnel and community members, provide learning opportunities to increase appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal cultures and traditions. Also, through the professional development sessions and the collaborative team work with other Civics teachers, this provided support and information to increase the comfort level for teachers to teach sensitive topics.

The Grade 10 Civics module encourages equity and respect for diversity throughout its content, and engages our Aboriginal students by enabling them to see themselves reflected in the curriculum and by allowing all students to gain an understanding of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, their contributions, history and the impact on society today.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

ABORIGINAL NAVIGATOR
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

ABORIGINAL NAVIGATOR OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Provide social/emotional support for students.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #2 Reduce Gaps in Student Achievement – Strategy 2.1 and 2.2

Indicators of Success:

Increased attendance rates

Fewer lates

Parental engagement

Increased credit accumulation

Budget

Action Plan / Implementation:

The Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker promotes and support students' social, emotional and academic achievement through direct service, consultation, collaboration and coordination while advocating and supporting students and their families including linkages with services that promotes student success.

The Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker provides opportunities for youth to learn about mental health issues and other health issues such as suicide, diabetes, addiction, or gambling to assist in the development of success plans for students that focus on strengths and address areas of need.

The Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker provides professional development and training for staff/students including prevention programs or programs that assist in accessing community supports has also been provided.

A School Social Worker was hired full time for the 2008-09 school year as the Aboriginal Navigator.

Aboriginal Students & Families

The Aboriginal Navigator/School Social Worker worked closely with Aboriginal students and their families. This included meeting one-on-one with students to discuss their academic and social issues and meeting with parents/guardians to provide support and information to them on community resources that are available to assist them. The Aboriginal Navigator/School Social Worker worked with just over 125 students (Aboriginal and Non-) in several schools in Thunder Bay.

Training Opportunities for Staff/Youth

Learning about First Nations Families & At Risk Youth

In March and April 2009, the Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker presented to secondary teachers and educational assistants and facilitators at two UAEP professional development sessions. The presentation included a brief description to the School Social Workers role and the referral process, an overview of the role as a High Risk Elementary School Social Worker. Also shared was information on common barriers that families and children have to achieving success at school and how that relates to attendance.

Risk Reduction Girls Group

In April and May 2009, the Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker provided four sessions for girls.

Purpose: Provide information and support to high risk female students to reduce overall risk level that has been identified by school administration. 4 aboriginal and 1 non-aboriginal female students have been identified for this group from Algonquin school

Objective: to provide information on a variety of topics that have been identified by school administration in collaboration with the Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker and her direct service with these students. This group will allow the students to make informed choices in their lifestyles (high risk behaviours) and overall well-being

Session #1 – Safety in the community

- Establish group rules and overview of the sessions
- Presentation from Youth Outreach Worker from Dilico services. This worker presented an overview of services offered, to youth 12 to 21.
- Discussion around high risk behaviors (substance use, hanging out in dangerous parts of the city, truancy, etc) and consequences of these behaviours, (charges, physical/sexual assault, drug overdose, etc)
- Safety planning with these youth to reduce these risks.
- Discussion on cutting back substance use or quitting and support and referrals that can be given from the Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker

Session #2 Presentation form New Experiences Program

- Review group rules
- Presentation from Ron Kanutski from New Experiences Program- Children's Centre Thunder Bay, overview of the program that addresses substance use and mental health issues, cultural community programs in the evening, access to services through Children Centre Thunder Bay
- Discussion of substance use and personal testimony from Ron Kanutski on his life and issues with addictions.
- All students were given the opportunity to join this group and received on going support through the Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker on this issue
- Reviewed any topics where the youth would like support; the students identified the topic of smoking

Session #3 Smoking

- Review group rules
- Presentation from health unit nurse on smoking, outline of services offered and support that could be given with cessation if requested.
- The discussion included the dangers of smoking, long term consequences, physical addictions to smoking, and ideas on how to quit.

Session #4 Gang Unit/Community Police presentation

- This session was set up to give information to the students on gangs in Thunder Bay and the risks and consequences of this issue
- The students had stopped attending school for a period of time, and this session could not be completed

Review/Evaluation of the group by the students

The group met 3 weeks after the last session and discussed the overall group and each session. The feedback revealed that the students found some aspects helpful in providing them information on the identified topic and services available in the community.

School engagement was discussed as many students in this group had disengaged from school and struggled with attendance issues and academic achievement. Long term goals were explored and what steps will be needed to accomplish these goals. Two of these students are already working with the attendance counselor in terms of long standing attendance issues.

All of these students have many barriers to academic achievement and attendance issues as all identified families are impoverished and many of these families are struggling with addiction issues within the family unit and have/are working with child protection services. A large number of these families are single working mothers who are working a variety of shifts, and supervision is an issue in terms of substance use and attendance at school.

It was noted that on the date that the group meeting, all of the girls came to school that day to attend the group.

Conclusion

The Aboriginal Navigator/School Social Worker provided ongoing support to students and their families. The dedication and support that was provided was to promote parental and student engagement while addressing attendance issues. Having access to a social worker provides any family and student with the positive encouragement and support that is needed.

There are many issues and circumstances that exist and arise with students and families. There is no question to how invaluable this support system is to the success of student academic and social goals. Continued emotional and mental support for students and families is essential to their successes.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

APPROPRIATE ABORIGINAL CONTENT, RESOURCES AND MATERIALS
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

APPROPRIATE ABORIGINAL CONTENT, RESOURCES & MATERIALS
OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Build capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices.

Build capacity to support identity building including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #3 High Levels of Public Confidence - Strategy 3.2

Indicators of Success:

Build capacity to support: Aboriginal student identity and student success, and staff.

Provide accurate and reliable Aboriginal content, resources and materials being utilized and integrated in the schools/classrooms.

Provide opportunities for an increased comfort level for teachers to embed/teach Aboriginal content in the curriculum. Teachers will feel reassurance that the resources/materials being utilized are appropriate.

Budget

Action Plan / Implementation:

The compilation, development, and sharing of resources which incorporate meaningful First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultural content/resources into curriculum and school environment allows youth to recognize their identity built within their surroundings, developing a sense of pride and belonging.

Through ongoing professional development opportunities and at the elbow assistance from the Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher, Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer, and Aboriginal community members/role models, this initiative built capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices, and built capacity to support identity building including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures.

The resources compiled connect to “Our Welcoming Learning Environment” scan by infusing Aboriginal content, perspective, values and beliefs through instructional and assessment practices.

Project Coordinator / Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher:

The following are duties that were executed to administer the outcome and goals of the Appropriate Aboriginal Resources and Materials initiatives and goals:

- Coordinated the resources and supports for Aboriginal Student Success.
- Built capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Built capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices through at the elbow coaching in classrooms and participation in school based professional learning communities.
- Built capacity to improve literacy and numeracy skills through the coaching model and professional learning communities.
- Supported the implementation of student achievement initiatives to improve Aboriginal students’ literacy and numeracy skills, built capacity for effective instructional, assessment and evaluation practices, delivered professional development “at the elbow” for teachers and support staff, and assisted with the implementation of Board and Ministry initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal Education.
- Assisted schools on an individual basis (i.e. to implement Aboriginal content into planning and instructional practices).
- Worked collaboratively with the Secondary Resource Teacher and the Aboriginal Liaison & Partnership Officer and with Aboriginal role models in the community.

Resources & Materials:

Books

There have been numerous books that have been purchased for schools’ literacy resource rooms. The First Peoples Resource Collection was locally developed and these resources are available to elementary and secondary schools.

Books include: fiction, non-fiction, leveled, guided reading sets, big books, graphic novels, Aboriginal newspapers and magazines, and Aboriginal brochures.

Locally Developed Resources

Through various components of the project, teacher resources have been developed. This would include the Grade 10 Civics module, Our Welcoming Learning Environment document, Elder/Senator Protocol, Family Connections booklet, etc.

Lakehead Public Schools' Instructional Materials Centre

A wide variety of elementary and secondary leveled books have been purchased and kept in the Board's IMC for teacher usage. These resources include those mentioned above, but also include Native Language, Native Studies, cross-curricular subject based, and online video streaming.

Web based Resources

Access to online resources pertaining to Aboriginal perspectives, cultures, traditions, curriculum, lessons, and other informational links have been uploaded on the Board's Aboriginal Education web page.

Teacher Learning / Support

Learning Teams

The collaboration and team work of teachers, Urban Aboriginal Strategy, and the Urban Aboriginal Education Project team, resources were selected and recommended for purchasing.

Professional Development

Ongoing professional development provided teachers with an opportunity to meet Aboriginal role models, elders, artists, and resource personnel to gain an understanding of Aboriginal perspective and values. These members were also invited into the teachers' classrooms.

These sessions also provided teachers with an opportunity to review the resources and materials that were available hence they worked collaboratively and developed appropriate lessons geared to these resources and their school's professional learning community goals and initiatives.

At the Elbow

The Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers and Aboriginal role models and artists worked closely with teachers, at their request, to assist in embedding appropriate Aboriginal resources and materials into their instructional, and assessment practices. This support empowered teachers to incorporate more Aboriginal resources into their planning.

Community Connection

Accessing Aboriginal community members and the Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer, presented teachers the opportunity to become more aware of the human resources that are available for classroom visits in the community.

Conclusion

This project initiative was most valuable for teachers by providing for them accurate and reliable Aboriginal content, resources and materials that they can utilize and integrate in the schools/classrooms. The professional development component was intrinsic to increase the comfort level for teachers to embed/teach Aboriginal content in the curriculum. Through teacher's feedback from the professional development sessions, teachers have informed that they feel reassurance that these sessions, and that they're utilizing the resources.

Having access to appropriate Aboriginal resources, materials, and participating in professional development builds capacity to support Aboriginal student identity and student success, and staff.

Action Plan / Implementation:

Integrate Aboriginal cultural activities and utilize Aboriginal Role Models in the classroom(s), and within the schools. This will be connected to curriculum, building cultural awareness, specifically enriching for youth as it creates a connection to school and community.

Deliver experiential learning for Aboriginal students through links to community. This opportunity will allow teachers to understand and experience working with Aboriginal peoples that will build awareness on relationship building, protocols, and cultural teachings to expand learning in the classrooms. Students embrace a culturally significant way of learning.

The UAEP teamed up with the Learning Through The Arts program and created an integrated arts program in all elementary schools. A local Aboriginal artist or artisan delivered a series of lessons to all Grade 7 students and additional classes in K - Grade 6 schools. Aboriginal artists connect their traditional talents to the curriculum, build cultural awareness, and serve as role models to students of all cultures.

Collaborative training and planning occurred amongst the Aboriginal artists and participating classroom teachers. Schools have participated in a variety of community events, engaged guest speakers, and participated in Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity training. Some of these Aboriginal artists/artisans have also presented at the UAEP Professional Development sessions for elementary and secondary teachers.

Project Coordinator / Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher:

The following are duties that were executed to administer the outcomes and goals of the professional development sessions:

- Built capacity which supported identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Supported our Aboriginal Education initiatives in grades K - 12.
- Presented a workshop on Engaging Aboriginal students and Cultural Awareness to the teachers and artists in the Aboriginal Role Model Program.
- Participated in the Call to Artists evening session that was conducted. Responded to participant's questions regarding the UAEP and program initiatives.
- Worked collaboratively with the Learning Through The Arts Manager.

Aboriginal Role Model Program Partnership

This program allows First Nations, Metis, Inuit artists and artisans from our community to share their artistic skills and stories with our teachers and students in grades 7 and 8 (or in grade 3 in those schools that do not have grade 7 and 8). It promotes empowerment, self-identity and self-esteem building in First Nation, Métis and Inuit

students, and build the Board's education leadership capacity and coordination with our First Nation, Metis and Inuit communities.

A Call to First Nation, Metis and Inuit Artists was launched through the local newspaper and through connections with local Aboriginal organizations. There was also an information session for Aboriginal artists prior to applying for this opportunity. There were over fifteen community members who attended this session.

In 2009, nine Aboriginal artists were selected to participate in Aboriginal Role Model program and partnership with Learning Through The Arts. They were paired up with a few elementary teachers and received training on curriculum expectations and lesson planning. In 2010, four Aboriginal artists remained in the program.

Between 2008-2010 approximately fifty classroom teachers and the artists who participated received training from Learning through the Arts. The mission was to link Aboriginal cultural activities to curriculum. Building cultural awareness is particularly enriching for youth as it creates a connection between school and community. The training focused on building capacity for culturally inclusive and effective teaching practices by integrating meaningful First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultural perspectives, teachings and activities to accommodate different learning styles and to meet the learning needs of all teachers and students.

We are very excited to partner with Learning through the Arts and share this program with our elementary schools. This opportunity allowed teachers to understand and experience working with Aboriginal peoples that will build awareness on relationship building, protocol, and cultural teachings and expanded learning in the classrooms. Students embraced this culturally significant way of learning.

Conclusion

Having Aboriginal role models in the classroom working with teachers and students is essential to promoting positive student engagement in the school and the classroom, and also provide teachers with the confidence to integrate Aboriginal content and perspective into their instructional planning and curriculum.

Each elementary school hosted an Aboriginal role model / artist who worked with their teachers in the classroom. This has also prompted teachers to invite other Aboriginal role models into the school for school cultural activities.

Through other areas of the UAEP, Aboriginal role models / artists have been invited to present at numerous professional development sessions for elementary and secondary teachers and for educational assistants.

Aboriginal role models provide cultural and traditional knowledge and perspective which ultimately promotes the positive acceptance of diversity and social inclusion of Aboriginal peoples in the community.

External Student Support

- Liaise with boarding parents and families

Community Connections

- To coordinate special events both in school and outside of school.
- To facilitate yearly events such as Fall Harvest and the Community Orientation
- Liaise with First Nations Education Counselors with regards to individual students

Professional Commitments and Involvement at the School-level

- Work with Student Services to timetable and place students in appropriate programs and courses
- Work with Student Services to track students during the semester
- Mentor/co-teach with other teachers, particularly Native Studies and Native Language teachers in the school
- Participate on the Cross-Curricular Literacy Committee to assist with embedding Aboriginal content and to improve Aboriginal literacy in the school
- Participate in Aboriginal Education and Literacy professional development sessions
- Provide professional development where appropriate and share information about program at staff meetings
- Assist with after-hours community events such as Open Houses, Literacy Nights, and Diversity Week
- Assist co-op teachers in finding appropriate work placements for Aboriginal students
- Facilitate Aboriginal resource acquisition
- Complete grant forms (e.g. Student Speak Up) and student nomination forms (e.g. Aboriginal Achievement Awards)
- Facilitate guest speakers within the school

Professional Commitments and Involvement at the System-level

- Work with Program and other Special Assignment Teachers to improve student success

Aboriginal Transitions Program

The Aboriginal Transitions program provides in-school student supports, cultural and community connections designed to ease transitions for First Nations' students who leave their First Nation communities to complete their secondary education in Thunder Bay. In addition to social and emotional supports, schools have implemented a credit course that focuses on esteem and identity, and ensures students have the essential literacy skills necessary to be successful in other content areas.

The Aboriginal Transitions program is offered in four secondary schools, staffed with a Special Assignment Teacher (SAT). Transitions teachers (i.e. Special Assignment Teachers, Native Studies) received monthly training sessions to aid in their delivery of culturally appropriate, literacy based activities.

An additional component of the Aboriginal Transitions program includes building public confidence and collaboration with First Nation educators that will ease transitions for First Nation students. The Board has reached out to various First Nation educators and students through community visits and having a presence in many First Nation education forums. This has allowed the Board to build awareness of secondary school registration protocols, the importance of education, typical life in a secondary school and available community supports.

On December 21, 2009, Lakehead District School Board received approval for a new locally developed credit entitled Grade 10 Aboriginal Transitions Course. This course is focused on First Nations culture, as well as, Literacy foundation skills that will enable success in other areas of the curriculum.

Conclusion

Through being connected with the Special Assignment Teacher, students are able to access additional academic assistance, become more engaged in the community through participation in activities/events in both the school and community. The program has allowed for students to feel confident and build a sense of pride, be prepared academically, make positive life choices, and feel connected to community. As well, students feel connected and an integral part of the school culture. Lakehead Public Schools staff has become more culturally aware and sensitive to the transition challenges for Aboriginal students and are bringing students of all races together to feel connected and aware of additional community supports. Positive and supportive learning environments build confidence and encourage students to further their education.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

To provide a variety of programs to meet the varied learning needs and learning styles of students.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #2 Reduce Gaps in Student Achievement - Strategy 2.1

Indicators of Success:

Increased credit accumulation

Increased graduation rates over the long term

Increased attendance

Budget

Action Plan / Implementation:

Secondary Alternative Education programs operated in all high schools and at off-site locations. Individual student plans were created to focus on student strengths, address student needs, and support students so they may earn credits. Through the Urban Aboriginal Education Project, an Educational Assistant was hired for the 2008-2009 school year, to work with and support students in the Connections Program located at the former Forest Park School.

The Alternative Education Teacher and the Educational Assistant participated in the 2008-09 professional development sessions that focused on literacy, assessment, and culturally awareness.

The First Peoples Resource Collection and additional resources were provided to the staff and students in alternative education.

Professional Development & Resources:

The UAEP professional development sessions provided literacy and assessment strategies, and ongoing training in Aboriginal perspectives and curriculum for all participants, including the Alternative Education Teacher and Educational Assistant.

These sessions provided teachers hands-on learning while introducing Aboriginal perspective and voice. Secondary teachers, including the Alternative Education teacher were provided with hands-on training with the Developmental Reading Assessment and explored other assessments and strategies that could be applied in their assessment practices.

The Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher provided information on teaching the whole child, residential schools, treaties, oral tradition, and engaging Aboriginal youth. The Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer provided information on community resources and personnel that would support teachers with implementing Aboriginal perspective into their curriculum.

The Educational Assistant participated in professional development opportunities with the Later Literacy Program Educational Assistants (2008-09). There were five sessions that explored best practices in reading strategies. Graphic organizers, the Joyce MacDonald intervention program, and assessment tools were just a few topics that the Educational Assistants explored.

The resources in the First Peoples Resource Collection were introduced to the teachers and provided an opportunity for them to work collaboratively in planning lessons based on these books and secondary subject areas. Additional resources included graphic novels for intermediate and secondary students. The focus of these novels was on issues affecting Aboriginal youth (i.e. depression, diabetes and health, bullying, etc.).

Conclusion:

The ongoing training and support that the Alternative Education Teacher and Educational Assistant received from the UAEP professional development sessions allowed them to use literacy and assessment strategies when working with at-risk students. The inclusion of Aboriginal perspective and voice in the sessions provided a deeper understanding of Aboriginal people and their learning styles. The professional development and resources encouraged participants to implement Aboriginal content into their curriculum planning and to be aware of the Aboriginal human resources that are available to them in the community.

In order to increase student participation and engagement in learning and to improve attendance, it is important to provide educators opportunities for professional development to better understand Aboriginal people and learning. The ability to use

resources to infuse into schools and classrooms that reflect First Nation, Metis and Inuit perspective builds confidence in the Aboriginal students and to eliminates discrimination.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

FAMILY CONNECTIONS
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

FAMILY CONNECTIONS OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Parental Engagement and parent/student supports to improve student achievement.

Foster supportive and engaged families and communities.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #2 Reduce Gaps in Student Achievement – Strategy 2.2

Goal #3 High Levels of Public Confidence - Strategies 3.1 and 3.3

Indicators of Success:

The program will be developed in at least two school sites – one north zone and one south zone.

Increase participation of First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents in the education of their children.

Foster parenting skills.

Improve student attendance.

Create positive parent/student/community/ school relations.

Parents will participate in high school credit courses.

Budget

Action Plan / Implementation:

At each of the two school sites, First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents participated and learned how to be actively and directly involved in the education of their children,

specifically in supporting reading and writing and by participating in a variety of support networks such as life skills, access to community supports, and education opportunities.

Facilitated by the Adult Education Centre, parents had the opportunity to enroll in high school credit courses to work towards their high school diploma. Parents were supported in their pursuit of credits.

Partnership with Friendship Centre helped to increase participation and provided valuable resources and support. Community connections to Aboriginal organizations, people, and programming supported the students and staff in the program. The "Family Connections" handbook provided additional resources, tools, and strategies for parents/guardians, as well as a "Family Connections Cookbook" that was created by the participants.

Adult Education Manager – Barbara Kucherka:

The Adult Education Manager supervised the Family Connections program and has hired a part-time teacher to work with the parents to foster parenting skills and to support them in gaining credits toward a grade 12 diploma.

Family Connections 2008-2010:

The Family Connections Program has continued to operate in the 2009-2010 school year at two locations: St James Public School on the north side of Thunder Bay, and McKellar Park on the south side. For a short while, a third site was located at Ontario Works.

Thirty-nine students were registered in total with some overlap between sites. However, personal issues including health, addictions, abuse, etc were barriers that all of our best efforts could not address. Child care, healthy snacks, and transportation were all provided. For those parents who did attend, programming was provided in all areas that would help their children be successful in school: literacy; numeracy; how to help with homework; dealing with bullying, drugs and alcohol; parenting tips and healthy diets. As well, cultural teachings were incorporated into everything that was taught. Many of the activities were drawn from parents' experiences working on issues as they arose.

The following activities also took place:

- Community kitchens (in partnership with the Friendship Centre) at St James included sharing new recipes, discussions on nutrition and feeding a family on a budget and sharing cooking ideas and skills.
- Baking and Crafts – learning new recipes and skills, sharing ideas for healthy eating/snacks, making of a craft that could be done with children
- For the Love of Books – 4 sessions for parents to encourage their children to read

- Rock, Paper, Scissors – craft program in partnership with Friendship Centre – ideas and supplies for parents to work on at home, learning how crafts can help develop children’s motor skills and creativity – 6 sessions held at McKellar during April and May
- Guest speaker from the Friendship Centre – conducted a session on Self-esteem for parents at McKellar; also was a guest “chef” for community kitchen doing traditional dishes
- U Make the Difference – 9 week program put on by the Friendship Centre – parenting skills that help parents interact with their children during play; ideas for developing communication skills in young children
- Participation in Earth Day Powwow on April 21st with Anishawbe Mushkiki
- First Aid and Self-Care training

Resources used included the following:

- Crafts – variety of books related to doing crafts with your children/ideas for parents
- Literacy – mini-lending library available to parents at both sites; books are divided into ages 0-3 and 4+
- Numeracy – resources kept on site to help parents help their children with math – manipulatives, tools for learning fractions, etc.
- One-on-one help for parents who struggle with math also provided.

Curriculum used included the following:

- Parents as Partners in Education – series of workshops put together by the Literacy and Basic Skills Program in the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board
- Healthy Food and Nutrition Workshop – created by the Family Connections Program using a variety of sources

Community Partnerships:

Partnerships were important to the success of our program. The Indian Friendship Centre provided child-minding in both sites and cultural teachings and programming as indicated above. Ontario Works provided support with referrals and offered a location one day a week at their Learning Centre. Anishawbe Mushkiki also provided referrals. Communities Together for Children – Ontario Early Years Centre also provided resources for parents including reading material and toy-lending.

Participation Form:

A participation feedback form was developed – the form has changed with suggestions made by participants. Under consideration is an initial “expectation” form that newcomers to the program can complete, and an exit form to be used when a participant leaves. One of the challenges of using this form is that the teacher does not always know if a participant is going to return to the program or

not. Follow-up phone calls are needed. Closer interaction with school social workers and community elders is planned.

Parents provide ongoing feedback to the Family Connections teacher. As well, feedback is found throughout the Family Connections Parent Guide Book.

Parent Feedback Samples:

"I joined the Family Connections Program because I wanted to work on my relationship with my daughter – I needed to stop being so busy and focus my attention on her. Family Connections gives me ideas of new things to do with my daughter. It also gives me confidence to try them!"

"When my daughter was learning about traditional teachings, we wrote them out in great big colourful words around the house: Respect, Wisdom, Honesty, Love, Courage, Humility, Truth... "Wow" my daughter said, "We'll never forget now Mom!"

"Remember to be patient with your child. Encourage her not to give up. And ask the teacher for extra help when needed!"

Graduation Rate:

Of the 39 students who took part over this 2008-09 year, 18 were registered in our credit program. Of those 18, 2 graduated during the year and one graduated over the summer. These students would not likely have accomplished this without the program as they had the benefit of a supportive environment and child minding services. This is significant to the families who will benefit from improved employment opportunities and role models for children in our school system.

Conclusion:

The Family Connections program has been successful in providing support and life and parenting skills opportunities for participants. The St James site has been a great success largely due to the partnership there with the Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre. Programming has been provided by, and in partnership with leaders at the Friendship Centre, and community kitchens have been held to support the parents and students registered in the Family Connections program. Parents were all introduced to community programming and one followed up by attending a course at Lakehead University. The parents all share and care about each other, checking up if someone is late or not attending and pushing each other to do school work. Their children have all become friends and there is a great dynamic amongst these children, including babies.

Active involvement by families and guardians fosters student learning and achievement, improves student attendance, and creates positive parent and school relationships. Access to resources, community, and programming enabled the Family Connections program to deliver and meet the needs of the parents who worked on obtaining their grade 12 credits, while learning life and parenting skills.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

LATER LITERACY PROGRAM
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

LATER LITERACY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Build capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices.

Enhance support to improve literacy and numeracy.

Results from DRA 4-8 will be used as an assessment for learning tool that will inform classroom instruction.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal #1 High Level of Student Achievement – Strategy 1.1

Goal #2 Reduce Gaps in Student Achievement – Strategy 2.2

Indicators of Success:

An improvement as measured by the DRA 4 – 8 for students participating in the later literacy program.

Budget

None

Action Plan / Implementation:

Under the direction of a facilitator, Educational Assistants will work with students in grade 7 and 8 to close gaps in literacy achievement in pilot schools

Focused on reading assessments and literacy strategies to improve overall results

Aboriginal Education Coordinator/Resource Teacher:

The following are duties that were executed to support this program:

- Facilitated professional development sessions for the Educational Assistants and Facilitators.
- Coordinated the resources and supports for Aboriginal Student Success with literacy resource teachers in program.
- Built capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Gathered DRA results from each group of students participating in the Later Literacy program.
- Supported the implementation of student achievement initiatives to improve Aboriginal students' literacy and numeracy skills, building capacity for effective instructional, assessment and evaluation practices, delivering professional development "at the elbow" for teachers and support staff, and assisting with the implementation of Board and Ministry initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal Education.

Later Literacy Program Development & Progress

In 2008-2009, five Educational Assistants were hired half-time to work in five schools with selected Aboriginal students. The five schools selected were McKellar Park, Algonquin, Ecole Gron Morgan, Kingsway Park, and Sir Winston Churchill. Under the direction of the school Special Education Facilitator, the Educational Assistants worked one-on-one with Aboriginal students in Grade 7 and 8 to close gaps in literacy achievement. The Educational Assistants and Facilitators received four professional development sessions specifically geared to literacy and assessment strategies and cultural awareness. Data on student improvement was collected and feedback was given at the end to evaluate the success of the program. Additional literacy resources were provided to each school.

Roles of the Facilitator and Educational Assistant

Facilitator

- The classroom teacher and facilitator chose the grade 7 and 8 Aboriginal students who would most benefit from this Later Literacy program. These students did not have to be on an Identified Education Plan. These students could be Level 1 students.
- The facilitator completed the assessments and interpreted the assessments
- The facilitator directed the Educational Assistant on the strategies to use for each student
- The facilitator reassessed the progress of the student (during and after the program)
- After the first nine-week block the Facilitator compiled the data; planned for the next 9-week block; shared data/information with UAEP Project Manager at another scheduled meeting

Educational Assistant

- The educational assistant participated in professional development session (specific to the Later Literacy program)

- The educational assistant implemented the reading program under the direction of the facilitator
- The educational assistant worked one-on-one with each student and delivered the literacy strategies and resources that were provided through the professional development sessions

Professional Development Training Sessions

The educational assistant received training over five sessions in the following four areas: Literacy, Cultural Awareness, Student Engagement, and reading software programs.

The initial training focused on the Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA's) and information on various reading software packages. The sessions following this, focused on reading strategies, particularly the Joyce MacDonald Later Literacy Program. These training approaches were geared to teaching students how to read and how to write.

The students selected for this program should have good attendance. Even though the educational assistant will work with five students, there should be six students selected, in case of attendance. The educational assistant will then be able to work with this student while the regular student is absent.

Program Implementation

- Each educational assistant worked a half-day at their designated school and worked with five grade 7 & 8 students for a ½ hour each daily.
- The educational assistant was in the schools for 19 weeks (end of January to the end of June)
- There was two 9-week blocks and 1 week to collect and analyze data
 - First 9-Week Later Literacy block February 2 – April 3, 2009 (first group of students)
 - Second 9-Week Later Literacy block April 14 – June 12, 2009 (another group of students)
- During the first 9-week interval, the educational assistant worked one-on-one with five students (prior reading assessments needed here for each student)
- During the 10th week, the facilitator can assessed each student
- During the final 9-week block the educational assistant worked one-on-one with another five students
- By the end of the Later Literacy program, 10 students worked with each educational assistant
- By June 18, 2009, 50 students had one-on-one reading support from the educational assistants

Assessing & Collecting Data

- Use DRA scores at the beginning
- Running Records

- Post assessment
- Training Session & Sharing Data

Professional Development Agenda Highlights

To support the goals of this program, the following are topics were shared with the educational assistants and facilitators:

- Aboriginal Perspective and Community Connections (R. Mishenene & C. Chukra)
- Learning about First Nations Families & At Risk Youth & Discussion Period (L. Ward, Aboriginal Navigator / School Social Worker)
- Reading program training: Academy of Reading Program and Kurzweil Program – Hands On Training (M. Fontaine, Special Education Resource Teacher)
- Various Reading / Writing Strategies, Graphic Organizers and Text Resources (R. Mishenene)
- Development Reading Assessment training (I. Anderson-Foster, Literacy Resource Teacher)
- Joyce MacDonald Later Literacy Program (P. Ricards, Rainy River DSB)
- Decoding Strategies (D. Madunic, Primary Resource Teacher)
- Comprehension Strategies (C. Radbourne, Teacher)

The resources shared with the educational assistants to support their training were:

- Reading, Writing, and Oral Strategies (Prompting, Think-alouds, modeling, sharing, encouraging, etc.)
- *The Cohesive Team* posters
- *Reaching Readers* book sets
- Graphic Organizers

Assessment

The facilitators reviewed the resources that were available in terms of assessment tools/strategies and reading resources, while keeping in mind “the need for consistency” in the program. The following is the plan they came up with:

Pre-Assessment

- DRA – scribed for the students (focus on reading)
- This will also determine the students needs

During - Resources used

- Reaching Readers program
- Cohesive Team (posters and bookmarks)
- Graphic Organizers

Running Records

- To be done once every two weeks

- Select two non-fiction; two fiction running records
 - Flynt Couter was used
- Post-Assessment
- DRA – scribed for the students (focus on reading)

Assessment Results

The DRA was primarily used to obtain pre- and post- data, however, other assessment tools were also utilized (i.e. Flynt Couter, Joyce MacDonald).

Facilitators submitted detailed reports for each student and included reading strategies that they used to meet the specific literacy needs for each student. The assessment analysis summary provides the overall percentage.

Assessment Analysis Summary

In actuality, there were 53 students that participated in the Later Literacy program between January and June 2009. Due to insufficient assessment data provided, the overall results focused on the data that was collected.

Data was collected from 48 students.

Data Results:

- 17% of students remained at the same grade level
- 60% of students moved up one grade level
- 19% of students moved up two grade levels
- 4% of students moved up more than two grade levels

Overall Feedback & Recommendations

Feedback: Facilitator - Assessment

Pre-Assessment – DRA

- New to assessing grade 7/8
- Lack of or no training
- Recommendation: Training (every year for teachers, facilitators, educational assistants)

Running Record

- Varying experiences from each educational assistant (too fast, too much, just right, etc.)
- Not all schools did it every two weeks
- Students' grades were higher in the running records but when they did the DRA the reading marks were lower
- Flynt Couter - does not take into consideration if answers were assisted or independently not consistent

- Inconsistency in assessments - not accurate
- Recommendation: Reading A to Z assessment program (time consuming but more accurate) & complete running records once a month

Post-Assessment – DRA

- Hard to see growth in 10 weeks.
- Recommendation: To look at programs in larger time blocks (terms) might see more measureable growth)

Feedback: Educational Assistant - Training and Resources

Joyce MacDonald Reading Program

- chunking, clustering, suffix/prefix
- provide student photocopies of resources

Reaching Readers program

- spans ability levels; works well when working with other teachers to make connections (i.e. history, science, etc...)
- lack of access to reader program/books; need more training on how to use them

The Cohesive Team (Posters and bookmarks were purchased for all five pilot school)

- helpful for students; bookmarks were great
- lack of space to post on walls (or room to work with students)

Reading / Writing Strategies / Graphic Organizers

- Used every day; Very useful

Reading Programs / Technology

- did not use Kurzweil – not really appropriate to use during the ½ hour block

Decoding Strategies

- Did not really used because students were able to decode (decoding not issue in grade 7/8)

Comprehension Strategies

- Feedback: useful strategies – post it notes

Social Worker Presentation

- Feedback: gave great perspective of Aboriginal students and struggles

Feedback: Additional Strategies & Resources Used

- chapter books introduced to students
- additional resources from library
- the Cohesive posters and bookmarks
- Later Literacy workshops that were provided were beneficial
- Reaching Readers
- Double Takes
- Using Library resources in attempt to access more selection (that the student would be more interested in)
- Twilight Series

Literacy Blocks: Did the student data help in planning?

- first group of students more engaged
- second group of not as interested
- certain students showed some behaviour issues
- individual students have different strengths / weaknesses
- students struggled with comprehension
- students struggled with retention of information
- some students could not make personal connections / interferences
- when it comes to non-fiction texts the students were more engaged
- attendance on ongoing issue
- the program helps students build self-esteem with the one-on-one
- students struggle with writing

Challenges

- some classroom teachers weren't engaged or involved
- some classroom teachers did not have close relationship with students
- not enough time to meet with the classroom teachers
- being aware of the school SMART goals (through PLC's)
- Attendance
- Behaviour / Attitude
- No interest in learning to read
- Some students don't read

Successes

- Increase in student literacy
- Increase in student participation
- Change in behaviour and attitude
- Students reading more (on their own)
- Increase in student confidence (i.e. reading aloud, participating in class)
- Incentives help: candy, snack (some students come in hungry)

Recommendations from Facilitator and Educational Assistant

- Contact classroom teacher for their input in student progress from program
- Pair up students (depending on the individual student)
- Feedback should not just focus on grades
- More emphasis on anecdotal comments – qualitative observations of students personal growth and development
- More resources – fiction and non-fiction – lack of school resources that interest students
- The program has to be a school focus – PLC – school plan should include Later Literacy
- Provide a secondary grade 9 course where students can get more support in developing their literacy

- Students need a more quiet environment, reading area. Not all schools had a room and were in main traffic areas (i.e. school library, hallway, etc.)

Conclusion

The Later Literacy program was successful for many of our Aboriginal students that were struggling with literacy. The explicit instruction that occurred individually for 30 minutes a day during the period of time was beneficial to the students' learning.

The resources that were utilized in this program supported the diverse learning needs of each student. Using resources that contain Aboriginal content and perspective engaged students on a deeper learning level.

Facilitators and educational assistants provided valuable feedback regarding some of the challenges and successes they experienced in this program. This feedback is instrumental in looking at what supports could be further investigated, obtained and provided to student, classroom teachers, educational assistants and facilitators.

Lakehead Public Schools
Urban Aboriginal Education Project

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FINAL REPORT
2008-2010

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Strategy to improve Student Success:

Build capacity for culturally inclusive effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices.

Build capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff and elected trustees.

Link to FNMI Framework:

Goal # 1 High Level of Student Achievement – Strategy 1.1

Goal # 3 High Levels of Public Confidence – Strategy 3.2

Indicators of Success:

At least two teachers from each elementary school will have participated in the professional learning sessions.

At least six teachers from each secondary school will have participated in the professional learning sessions.

Teachers will have tried at least one new strategy per professional learning session in their classrooms and reported back to the learning community on the impact in their classroom.

Staff, through a survey indicate an increased use effective teaching strategies.

Budget

-\$16,719

Action Plan / Implementation:

The focus of the professional development sessions was to introduce and model the use of the contents of the First Peoples Resource Collection, cultural and traditional teachings to the learning teams, to embed Aboriginal content into their literacy instructional practices, and to incorporate these into school SMART goals. Through active engagement and team work, teachers developed, practiced, and shared the lessons, assessment strategies, and approaches used with the whole group.

Members of the Thunder Bay Aboriginal community participated in the professional development sessions by providing their wisdom and knowledge in Aboriginal culture, tradition and perspective.

Teachers provided constructive and positive feedback from each session.

In 2008-09, there were five professional development sessions that were held specifically for elementary teachers. Approximately 50 elementary teachers participated as learning teams in the professional development sessions. The focus was to embed Aboriginal content into the balanced literacy program and school SMART goals.

In 2009-10, there were approximately 30 grade 5 teachers and 30 grade 7 teachers that participated in three professional development sessions. The focus was to embed Aboriginal content into cross-curricular / subject areas. These were mandatory training sessions.

In 2008-09, there were approximately 40 secondary teachers that participated in the professional development sessions. These were voluntary teachers that came from English, Geography, Science, Native Studies backgrounds. There were two professional development sessions that were held specific to these teachers. These teachers received professional development learning opportunities on embedding Aboriginal content, culture and perspective into these specific subject areas.

In 2009-10, there were approximately 50 secondary teachers that participated in the professional development sessions. These teachers were English teachers (9; 10; essential; applied). There were four professional development sessions dedicated to these specific teachers. The English teachers received professional development opportunities on effective literacy teaching and assessment strategies, while embedding Aboriginal content and perspective. These were mandatory training sessions.

The First Peoples Resource Collection booklet and contents have been provided to all elementary and secondary schools. There is a booklet specific to elementary and secondary. This resource is also available in pdf on the Board's Aboriginal Education web page.

Project Coordinator / Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher:

The following are duties that were executed to administer the outcome and goals of the professional development sessions:

- Coordinate the resources and supports for Aboriginal Student Success.
- Build capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Build capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices through at the elbow coaching in classrooms and participation in school based professional learning communities.
- Build capacity to improve literacy and numeracy skills through the coaching model and professional learning communities.
- Reduce gaps in student achievement through supporting precision goal setting and targeted, research based instructional strategies in schools.
- Supports our Aboriginal Education initiatives in grades K - 12.
- Supports the implementation of student achievement initiatives to improve Aboriginal students' literacy and numeracy skills, building capacity for effective instructional, assessment and evaluation practices, delivering professional development "at the elbow" for teachers and support staff, and assisting with the implementation of Board and Ministry initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal Education.
- Assist schools on an individual basis (i.e. to implement Aboriginal content into planning and instructional practices).
- Worked collaboratively with the Secondary Resource Teacher and the Aboriginal Liaison & Partnership Officer and with Aboriginal role models in the community.

PROJECT - RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FIRST PEOPLES RESOURCE COLLECTION

A Learning Team at the elementary and at the secondary division was established to create a list of books and resources that could be provided for each school. The following people were involved in this development: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal classroom teachers, Urban Aboriginal Strategy worker, and the Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers.

The books and bundle of items that were selected included one or more of the following: Aboriginal voice, perspective, content, culture, tradition, and language. The First Peoples Resource Collection was developed and two booklets were made: one for secondary and one for elementary.

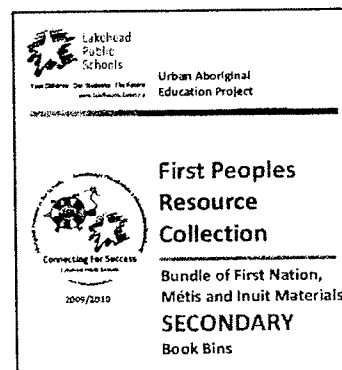
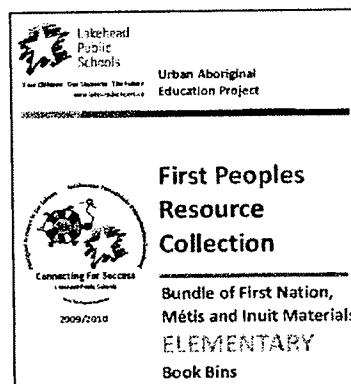
The items listed in the First Peoples Resource Collection were purchased and sent to every school. Through the professional development sessions, teachers had the opportunity to gain more understanding of Aboriginal culture, tradition, and perspective. The resources in the collection were utilized and teachers created lessons from the contents.

The First Peoples Resource Collection - Bundle Contents includes: Medicine Wheel felt template; Inukshuk; Metis Sash; Spoons; Arrowhead / flint; Talking Feather (Non-eagle feather. Used for sharing circles); Talking Stones; Miniature Moccasin; Dream Catcher; Birch Bark Canoe; Piece of hide; Pouch.

These items allow students to see various First Nation, Metis and Inuit items and to learn about them.

These items can be used by the teacher and/or when cultural teachers and elders visit to teach about the traditional and/or cultural purpose of these items.

The Elementary FPRC includes at least 20 books and the Secondary FPRC includes about 25 books that reflect Aboriginal content and perspective. Links to online Aboriginal resources have also been included in the First Peoples Resource Collection booklets.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: ELEMENTARY

2008-09 Professional Development Session Details:

Session 1: Friday, March 27, 2009 9:00-3:30 (Kanachihih Centre)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- UAEP Overview & Objectives (R. Mishenene)
- Keynote: Historical Impacts on Aboriginal People (R. Mishenene)
- Arrowheads & Inukshuks Circle (G.Price)
- Story Telling Circle (Joy Asham)
- Metis Sash, Spoons & Dance Circle (A. Moreau)
- Medicine Wheel / Holistic Circle (R. Mishenene)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- First Peoples Resource Collection texts
- Teacher Teams
- Lesson development (curriculum expectations / SMART goals)

Session 2: Friday, April 24, 2009 9:00-3:30 (Kanachihih Centre)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- Keynote: Aboriginal Perspective (B. Small, Negahneewin College)
- Aboriginal Games (W. Esquega)
- Story Telling Circle (Joy Asham)
- Metis Sash, Spoons & Dance Circle (A. Moreau)
- Nurturing Our Youth Medicine Wheel Teachings (A. Magiskan)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- First Peoples Resource Collection texts
- Teacher Teams
- Lesson development (curriculum expectations / SMART goals)

Session 3: Wednesday, May 13, 2009 9:00-3:30 (MNO)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- The Metis Nation: Metis Roots Presentation (S. Carpenter, Metis Perspectives)
- Metis Exhibition/Display/Teachings (S. Carpenter)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Lesson Sharing
- Teacher Teams
- Lesson development (curriculum expectations / SMART goals)

Session 4: Monday, June 8, 2009 9:00-3:30 (Kanachihih Centre)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- Keynote: “Exploring the Art of Roy Thomas” (L. Thomas, Anisinabae Art)

- Bannock Making – outdoor fire pit (S. Waboose)
- Sweat Lodge Teachings (F. MacDonald)
- Dream Catcher Teaching & Craft (S. Kakepetum)
- Ojibway Language (W. Esquega)
- Seven Grandfathers, Feather Teachings (G. Martin)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Lesson Sharing
- Closing Circle – Feedback & Next steps

2009-10 Professional Development Session Details: (Victoria Park Training Centre)

Session 1-Grade 7: Monday, November 30, 2009 8:30-2:40

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective (R. Mishenene & C. Radbourne)

- UAEP Overview & Objectives (D. Baxter)
- Engaging Aboriginal Learners
- Aboriginal Perspectives Activity
- Threading Indigenous themes through the Curriculum (D. Lentz)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Curriculum Documents & Long/Short Range Plans
- First Peoples Resource Collection
- Group Professional Planning Activity – Aboriginal Infusion (By subject and strand)
- Sharing Circles (*Including Lakehead University Research Group*)

Session 1-Grade 5: Monday, December 7, 2009 8:30-2:40

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective (R. Mishenene & C. Radbourne)

- UAEP Overview & Objectives (D. Baxter)
- Engaging Aboriginal Learners
- Aboriginal Perspectives Activity
- Threading Indigenous Themes into Curriculum
- Grade 5 Science -Energy Conservation(D. Dubinsky)
- Social Studies - Levels of Government (R. Kanutski)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connections

- First Peoples Resource Collection
- Curriculum Documents & Long/Short Range Plans
- Group Professional Planning Activity – Aboriginal Infusion (By subject and strand)
- Sharing Circles (*Including Lakehead University Research Focus Group*)

Session 2-Grade 7: Friday, January 22, 2010 8:30-2:40

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective (R. Mishenene & C. Radbourne)

- Perspective Activities - Four Corners; Graffiti Wall
- Professional Readings

Afternoon – Curriculum Connections

- Share TLCP Literacy Lesson Plan
- Professional Planning Time
- Science, Geography, History or Language Curriculum – need Curriculum documents (Plan a mini unit in Curricular Groups; Create assessment tool)

Session 2-Grade 5: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 8:30-2:40

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective (R. Mishenene & C. Radbourne)

- Perspective Activities - Four Corners; Graffiti Wall
- Professional Readings & Resource Sharing
- Aboriginal Innovations & Curriculum Connection (D.Lentz)

Afternoon

- Share TLCP Literacy Lesson Plan
- Professional Planning Time
- Science, Geography, History or Language Curriculum – need Curriculum documents (Plan a mini unit in Curricular Groups; Create assessment tool)
- *(Research Focus Group-part 2)*

Session 3-Grade 5/7 Tuesday, April 13, 2010 8:30-11:00 & 1:00-3:30

Morning – Grade 5 Wrap Up & Afternoon – Grade 7 Wrap Up
(R. Mishenene & C. Radbourne)

- Personal Reflection / Perspective / Placemat Activity
- Table Sharing & Whole Group Discussions
- Mentor Text Activity & Lesson creation / sharing
- Whole Group Sharing & Feedback

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: SECONDARY

2008-09 Professional Development Session Details:

Session 1: Wednesday, April 29, 2009 9:30-3:30 (Victoria Park TC)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- UAEP Overview & UAEP Objectives (J. Rissanen)
- Native Science (D. Barnes, Native Access Program - Lakehead University)
- Historical Legal Relationships (D. McPherson, Indigenous Learning - Lakehead University)
- Story Telling Circle (J. Asham)
- Metis Sash, Spoons & Dance Circle (A. Moreau)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Keynote: Historical Impacts on Aboriginal People (R. Mishenene)
- First Peoples Resource Collection texts
- Teacher Teams
- Lesson development (curriculum expectations / SMART goals)

Session 2: Tuesday, June 2, 2009 9:30-3:30 (Kanachihih Centre)

Morning – Cultural Teachings & Awareness

- Keynote: Aboriginal Perspective (Cathy Creighton, Anishnawbe Mushkiki)
- Strategies for Success (T. Fiddler)
- Learning from Our Experiences (E. Lachinette-Diabo)
- Nurturing Our Youth Medicine Wheel Teachings (A. Magiskan)
- Traditional Technologies (D. Lentz)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Teacher Teams – share lesson
- Lesson development (curriculum expectations / SMART goals)

2009-10 Professional Development Session Details:

Session 1: Monday, November 23, 2009 9:30-3:30 (Victoria Park TC)

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective & Assessment

- Engaging the Aboriginal Learner (R. Mishenene)
- Development Reading Assessment Training (I. Anderson-Foster)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Culturally Relevant Assessment Practices and Literacy Strategies (C. Radbourne & V. Cambly)

Session 2: Monday, December 14, 2009 9:30-3:30 (Victoria Park TC)

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective and Academic Success (V. Cambly)

- Four Corners Activity (What is the most important element to help Aboriginal students succeed?)
- Individual School Reports and Introductions (Schools will report on past, present and future school-based plans to help aboriginal students succeed based on LPS Four Pillars)
- PLC Jigsaw and Professional Reading (Aboriginal Metrics of Success)
- Curriculum Groups:
 - GAP Analysis: Past, Present and Future based on LPS Four Pillars
 - What are the ten essential learning goals for each course?

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- First Peoples Resource Collection (R. Mishenene)
- Literacy Strategies (V. Cambly)
- Group lesson development (literacy strategy / assessment and connection to resource from First Peoples Resource Collection)

Session 3: Thursday, February 25, 2010 9:30-3:30 (Victoria Park TC)

Morning – Aboriginal Perspective

- Cultural Teachings (I. Mercier, Elder)
- Engaging Students (Circle – Reading – Sharing) (R. Mishenene)
- Effective Literacy Strategies (i.e. Infer) (R. Mishenene)

Afternoon – Curriculum Connection

- Aboriginal Resources (Online / IMC) (R. Mishenene)
- Preparing Aboriginal Students for the OSSLT (V. Cambly)
- Curriculum Groups – Lesson sharing & development

Session 4: Monday, May 3, 2010 9:30-3:30 (Victoria Park TC)

Morning – Curriculum Connection

- Engaging Boys in Literacy & Professional Strategy Sharing (V. Cambly)
- Graffiti Wall – Looking at your feedback
- Me Read & How? Activity (pairs)

Afternoon – Aboriginal Perspective

- Perspectives on Culture & Education (Dr. P. Berger, Lakehead University)
- Poetry and Personal Journey with Literacy (C. Waite, Aboriginal Poet)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY

Strategy to Improve Student Success:

The learning teams will invite participation from community partners, Confederation College and Lakehead University and involve other community partners to expand and enhance knowledge.

To enhance student learning, focus on getting youth active in the community through participation in various community cultural events, such as Thompson Highway play performance and Fall Harvest.

Continue to offer and seek other PD opportunities for learning, knowledge sharing and collaboration e.g. Summer Institute

Indicators of Success:

Staff, through a survey indicate an increased use effective teaching strategies.

2008-10 Action Plan / Implementation:

There were additional voluntary professional development sessions that were open to a variety of Lakehead DSB teachers and staff.

2008-09

- Introduction to Ojibway Language Workshop
 - Tuesday, April 14, 2009 – Two sessions (am / pm)
 - Shyanne Hovorka Ojibway language instructor
 - Approximately 75 staff (custodians, EA's, secretaries, staff) attended
- Native Studies Professional Learning Community
 - Tuesday, May 5, 2009 – one morning session (Victoria Park TC)
 - Approximately 10 teachers attended (NS, SATs)
- Partnership with English Language Learners (ELL) secondary program
 - FNMI books were purchased and lessons were created and tried (shared)
 - Aboriginal perspective was included in the regular workshops

2009-10

- Native Studies / Language teachers participated in two separate Native Studies Professional Learning Community conferences funded by:
 - Ministry of Education – Tuesday, March 30, 2010 (full day)
 - Lakehead Public Schools – Thursday, May 13, 2010 (full day)
- Aboriginal Perspectives & French Immersion
 - Tuesday, April 20, 2010 9:00-3:30
 - Aboriginal perspective included (Gerry Martin, Elder)
 - Aboriginal resources written in French provided

- Aboriginal Oral Language & Tradition Workshop (Partnership with Lakehead Elementary Teachers of Ontario)
 - Teachers had opportunity to voluntarily participate in Aboriginal Culture and Oral Language workshop
 - Friday, May 14, 2010 8:30-2:45 (Old Fort William)
 - Aboriginal perspectives and language circles:
 - Embedding Aboriginal content – Heather Harris
 - Ojibway Language Circle – William Esquega & Elaine Edwards
 - Engaging Aboriginal Youth – Bob Sleeper
 - Oral tradition & knowledge – Nathaniel Moses & Joy Asham
- Aboriginal Education workshops (Requested by, and in partnership with Lakehead Occasional Teachers union)
 - Teachers had opportunity to participate in three (2 hour) sessions:
 - Embedding Aboriginal Resources and Literacy – Monday, May 17, 2010
 - Aboriginal Student Engagement – Thursday, May 20, 2010
 - Aboriginal Culture – Tuesday, March 30, 2010

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: LAKEHEAD STAFF

Strategy to Improve Student Success:

Build capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff and elected trustees.

Continue to facilitate PD Aboriginal cultural awareness sessions with all staff building on what has occurred in 07/08 e.g. Release of Aboriginal Presence In Our Schools – A Guide For Staff

Indicators of Success:

All schools including all staff will have had “part 2” of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness sessions.

2008-10 Action Plan / Implementation:

Lakehead Public School employees and personnel participated in two sessions on Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity training. These would usually be held at staff meetings.

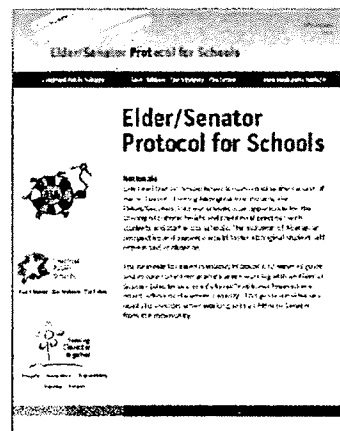
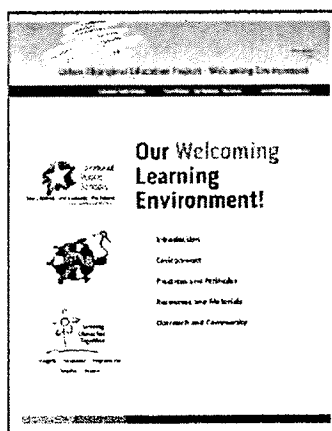
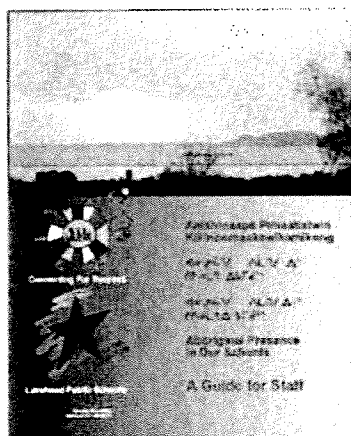
Each session is presented by Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher and/or Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer.

In 2008-09, schools received the first cultural awareness session that focused on the Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools Guide and community relationships and population.

In 2009-10, schools received the second session focusing on welcoming environments, the Elder/Senator Protocol, and Medicines.

Each presentation session is approximately 30 minutes in length.

The presentations (session one & two) have been uploaded and shared on our Board’s, Aboriginal Education web page.



Conclusion

The ongoing professional development sessions has allowed teachers to work together collaboratively to embed more Aboriginal content and perspective in the instructional and assessment practices, while making concrete connections to the literacy and cross-curricular Ministry expectations and school/board SMART goals. The sessions focused on building capacity for culturally inclusive effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices.

Providing teachers with an opportunity to learn first-hand from Aboriginal people about culture, tradition, historical context, and perspectives, allowed teachers to ask questions and embark on embracing this new knowledge in their instructional and assessment practices. To better assist and support the teachers on their professional development journey in Aboriginal education, teachers connected with local Aboriginal human resources: Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers; Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer; Aboriginal artists, elders, senators, role models; and Aboriginal organizations. These human resources have been utilized and accessed by many teachers, elementary and secondary, creating capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students.

The teacher feedback from these sessions have been positive and demonstrate that the professional development sessions have been invaluable for teachers, and that they would like these opportunities to continue.

Engaging with the Aboriginal community members and Aboriginal human resources has empowered teachers to incorporate more Aboriginal content and perspective (i.e. residential schools, treaties, first-hand stories, etc.) into their instructional practices, ultimately engaging all students, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, in their learning.

PROJECT – RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

OUR WELCOMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The “Welcoming Learning Environments” framework was developed to identify welcoming, inclusive environments. This includes: physical environment, practices and attitudes, resources that were purchased or developed, and community outreach and involvement. This was developed to incorporate the goals of the UAEP and the FNMI Education Framework Policy to building inclusion of Aboriginal students and education in our schools.

The following four areas that have been identified in the “Our Welcoming Learning Environment” document to achieving the goals are outlined:

1. Environment

The environment of the school includes the physical aspects that create positive impressions when students and families come into the building.

- Entry Points, Bulletin Board, Signage, Pamphlets/Brochures, Posters, Logo, Welcoming Staff

2. Practices & Attitudes

The practices and attitudes demonstrated by teachers and staff are and important for relationship building and inclusion.

- Registration, Staff, Interviews, Programming: Fair start/ Good Start, Parent/Guardian Involvement, Community Services, Invitations

3. Resources & Materials

The resources and materials identified for their Aboriginal content and perspectives have been purchased for our schools.

- Books: Leveled, Fiction, Non-Fiction, Graphic Texts / Novels
- Additional Classroom Resources: NFB (films), First People Resource Collection, Newspapers – Local (i.e. Chronicle Journal) and Aboriginal (i.e. Wawatay, Seven Magazine)
- Teacher Resources & Skill Sets: Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools Guide for Staff, Training on Aboriginal Awareness & Culture, Cultural teachings to connect with the First People Resource Collection, Teaching strategies to build literacy, Tribes
- Additional Teacher and Staff Resources: Aboriginal Role Models (i.e. Artists), Elders, Community Resource Booklet, Community Guests, Attending Special Events, Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers,

Aboriginal Education Advisor, Lakehead Public Schools Web Page –
Aboriginal Education, Transitions Program, Mentoring Program,
Bulletin Boards

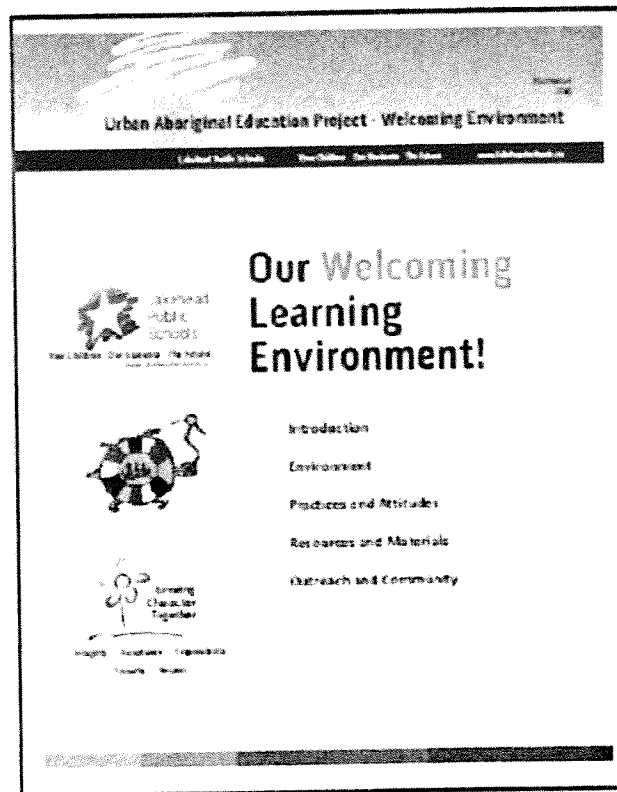
4. Outreach & Community

Outreach to the community is essential to building proactive and positive partnerships which support student learning. Accessing community input and resources provides our schools with sustainability in our goal of implementing Aboriginal perspectives.

- Coordination of community services: Red Cross (access to food donations for breakfast/lunch programs), Elders Council & Protocol, Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee members, and Urban Aboriginal Strategy

In summary, this environmental scan is a work in progress that provides an overview of the actions and evidence that were undertaken through the Urban Aboriginal Education Project.

This document is available in pdf on our Board's Aboriginal Education web page.



WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT SCHOOL TEAM

Welcoming Environment School Teams Meetings & Outcomes 2008-2009

Meeting 1: Wednesday, April 29, 2009

The Welcoming Environment school team leads met with the Superintendent and the Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher to discuss the Urban Aboriginal Education Project initiative: Welcoming Environment.

After reviewing the four components of the program, the school team included information and had inquiries to each area:

- a) Environment
 - Signage – LPSB will provide one sign per school that will welcome visitors. The language will be in Ojibway which recognizes the traditional lands in the Thunder Bay area, more specifically to acknowledge the Fort William First Nation. Roman orthography will be included on the signage.
 - Pamphlets / Brochures – connect with community organizations / services for their brochures (that could be displayed / provided to parents at each school).
- b) Practices & Attitudes
 - Fair Start Program that Ogden school uses – this program creates a welcoming environment by providing tea and assistance to Aboriginal parents.
 - Good Start Program at McKellar school – this program involves the school facilitator connecting with parents and students. The facilitator takes an inventory survey (likes/dislikes); administers academic assessment on new student; connects student with peer/buddy; has a team meeting with the classroom teacher; and introduces the student to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy leader.
 - Parent / Guardian Involvement – It was suggested that Beendigen should be included in this program/process.
- c) Resources & Materials
 - Aboriginal Role Models – Connect with NAN, INAC, Matawa for Aboriginal role model posters (local role models)
- d) Outreach & Community
 - Elders Council & Protocol – standard needs to be set (i.e. honorariums, approaching elder, etc.); Jojo Guillet from the Thunder Bay Catholic DSB would like to participate in this process.

Next Steps:

- Define minimum standard that is consistent between the five schools
- Survey results together – discuss next steps
- Gather input from Urban Aboriginal Strategy and the Aboriginal Education Council Committee regarding the Welcoming Environment Draft
- Walk through McKellar Park School and Ogden Community School to see what they have (in terms of what are listed and not listed in the Draft Welcoming Environment)

Meeting 2: Friday, May 1, 2009

The Welcoming Environment school teams and Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher visited two turnaround schools that had a high Aboriginal student population and have demonstrated success with creating partnerships with the Aboriginal community and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy team. McKellar Park School and Ogden Community School have created learning environments that are welcoming and supportive to Aboriginal families, students, and community members.

The walk through focused on the four elements of the Welcoming Learning Environment draft. Principals were able to ask questions about literacy, family, and after school programs that are delivered at these two schools.

Professional Reading: Principals invited to read and share with teaching staff.

- “Seeing Your School As Others See It” Welcoming Environment (Jeffco Public Schools. http://jeffco.k12.co.us/home/info/welcoming_environment.pdf)

Meeting 3: Wednesday, May 27, 2009

The following are recommendations that the principals of the five pilot schools would like see in addition to the existing four areas of the “Our Welcoming Learning Environment” Draft: Environment, Resources and Materials, Practices and Attitudes, and Outreach and Community

Not all items were acted upon. The schools were given a budget of items and resources that they could obtain through this. Some recommendations listed below would be decisions that would have to be agreed upon by the school and/or board budget and initiative.

1. Environment – Additional Recommendations:

Recommendations	Outcome (since meeting)
a. Brochure shelf	a. Purchased & Installed
b. Translate brochures (from school board)	
c. Translate curriculum	

d. Extra signage for main rooms (in addition to the LPS welcome/greeting)	d. School Decision
e. Directory/Direction signs translated	
f. Role model posters (ordered for the five pilot schools)	f. Laminated & Displayed
g. Open space /display case to display Aboriginal things	g. School Decision
h. Diversity posters (i.e. LPS diversity posters)	
i. Digital/voice picture frames at main entrance	
j. NAN maps (put on foam core)	j. Hard Mounted & Installed
k. TV/Screens to welcome (not all schools want this)	
l. Aboriginal Presence Logo – printed & framed (or painted on wall)	l. School decision
m. Carpet with Aboriginal theme	m. School decision
n. Tracks painted or applied to the floor of each entrance that directs people to the office (i.e. bear tracks, wolf tracks, school-animal tracks, etc.)	n. School decision

2. Practices and Attitudes – Additional Recommendations:

Recommendations	Outcome (since meeting)
a. Focus groups – Rachel / Carolyn should meet with parents/guardians of Aboriginal students to get input (at school discretion and initiative)	a. Lakehead University's research team conducted interviews in focus groups to compile input from Aboriginal community.
b. Centralized system to welcome and registration of students	
c. Connect with Aboriginal organizations to compile resources (brochures, visits, etc.)	c. A compilation of Aboriginal organizations contact information developed for five schools and a letter requesting informational brochures be sent to these schools.
d. Create & display LPS Registration Poster in Aboriginal organizations	
e. Work with the City of Thunder Bay	
f. Create a common powerpoint / framework for early registration (or life in high school – similar to the JK dvd)	
g. Continue with on-going Professional Development for ALL staff on Aboriginal Awareness	
h. Access to Aboriginal Parent/Guardian Advocate	h. Training sessions for the Aboriginal Parent/Guardian advocate volunteers have been held four times focusing on leadership and learning about Board policies, procedures, resources, etc. A booklet has been created and is also available in pdf on the Board's Aboriginal Education web page.

3. Resources and Materials

Recommendations	Outcome (since meeting)
a. Leveled Books Fiction & Non-Fiction; Graphic Texts / Novels	a. Books were purchased (2009) and were placed in the Board's

<p>b. Additional Classroom Resources NFB (films) – online link from Aboriginal Education web page First People Resource Collection Newspapers – Local and Aboriginal (i.e. Wawatay) Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools</p> <p>c. Teacher Resources & Skill Sets Training on Aboriginal Awareness & Culture Cultural teachings to connect with the First People Resource Collection Teaching strategies to build literacy</p> <p>d. Additional Teacher and Staff Resources Aboriginal Role Models (i.e. Artists) Elders Protocol Community Guests Community Resource Booklet Attending Special Events Aboriginal Education Resource Teachers Aboriginal Community Liaison Partnership Officer Lakehead Public Schools Web Page – Aboriginal Education Transitions & Mentoring Program Bulletin Boards for Aboriginal Education / culture</p> <p>e. Additional Recommendations: Welcome to LPS cd – mail out to communities Aboriginal Book Shelf in library (or classroom) Aboriginal stickers & posters Leveled books for schools (Update: Leveled Books - Eagle Crest and/or Loon series will be purchased for all schools – primary grades) Graphic Novels Aboriginal Book Lists & Recommended Books; Aboriginal books that were ordered in the fall for each school library/resource room</p>	<p>Information Materials Centre (2010) for teachers to access. Graphic novels were purchased for all secondary and elementary (gr.7/8) classrooms (2009).</p> <p>b. Links to Aboriginal education resources and perspectives have been included in the Board’s Aboriginal Education web page. The First Peoples Resource Collection books and bundle of items have been purchased (2009) and have been placed in all schools (2010). Wawatay and Seven Youth Magazine have been ordered and sent to secondary teachers (who also order new issues). Online streaming of films has also been implemented (2010). The Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools Guide has been given to each school at the Staff Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity sessions (2009-10).</p> <p>c. Teachers participated in ongoing professional development sessions focusing on the First Peoples resources and literacy.</p> <p>d. Aboriginal role models and community continue to be invited for school events and functions that focus Aboriginal perspective, culture and tradition sharing. The Aboriginal Education web page has been updated to include numerous links and resources for teachers and staff.</p> <p>e. Schools were given four booklists to order books that were written by Aboriginal authors and/or contain Aboriginal perspective / content. Schools ordered books.</p>
---	--

4. Outreach and Community

Recommendations	Outcome (since meeting)
-----------------	-------------------------

<p>a. Coordination of community services Red Cross (access to food donations for breakfast/lunch programs) Elders Council & Protocol</p> <p>b. Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee Urban Aboriginal Strategy (currently in a few schools)</p> <p>c. Additional Recommendations:</p> <p>UAS to begin work last week of August for registration (good time to promote program and to welcome new students/parents) Aboriginal Parent/Guardian Advocacy and/or Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer and Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher display or present during registration.</p>	<p>a. The Elder/Senator Protocol has been created and posted on Aboriginal Education web page. It has also been shared with staff and teachers at Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity sessions.</p> <p>b. Urban Aboriginal Strategy continues to operate in schools. Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee continues to be involved in education system to offer recommendations and provide guidance to the school board.</p> <p>c. Presentations have been provided to schools that have requested presence at kindergarten registrations.</p>
--	--

Meeting 4: Thursday, June 18, 2009

Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher presented recommendations to the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee (AEAC). The following recommendations were added to the list by AEAC in addition to the Welcoming Environment committee recommendations.

Recommendations	Outcome (since meeting)
<p>a. Include treaty posters from the Robinson-Superior treaty area also.</p> <p>b. Have Ojibway on Synervoice announcements</p> <p>c. Get free resources from INAC and Canada National Health & Welfare for Aboriginal People</p>	<p>a. and c. Maps and resources were ordered and sent to the schools.</p>

Welcoming Environment School Teams Meetings & Outcomes 2009-2010

Meeting 5: Thursday, November 19, 2009

Dr. Lisa Korteweg, Lakehead University research, shared some information on the research that is being done on the UAEP, specifically with establishing focus groups (administrators, teachers, staff, students). The principals in attendance participated in a session.

The school team reviewed last year's progress and reviewed samples of the Welcoming Environment handout/booklets. Principals shared what best practices and visual

samples of what it being done in their school to creating a more welcoming environment.

St. James school voluntarily withdraws its participation in the Welcoming Environment program as they have received additional funds and would like to have another school participate in this project's initiative that would most benefit.

Purchasing brochure racks would be ordered by the Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher for all five schools and a list of Aboriginal and non-community organizations would be created for each school to request informational brochures.

Professional Reading: Principals invited to read and share with teaching staff.

- Creating a Welcoming and Safe School by John E. Mayer (International Academy of Education. http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/EducationalPracticesSeriesPdf/Practice_16.pdf)
- Culturally Competent Schools: Guidelines for Secondary School Principals by Mary Beth Klotz (National Association of School Psychologists. <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/Culturally%20Competent%20Schools%20NASSP.pdf>)

Meeting 6: Wednesday, January 13, 2010

CD Howe was selected to participate. Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher will meet with the principals at CD Howe and provide information on the UAEP Welcoming Environment initiative.

Quotes have been received and orders have been made for the following:

- Brochure Racks & Maps
 - Brochure rack from Surecraft Plastics
 - 3 Tier for Gron, Algonquin, Sherbrooke, CD Howe
 - 4 Tier for Churchill
 - Mounting Ontario First Nation's Maps on hardboard
 - Order 3 each for CD Howe, Ecole Gron Morgan, Sherbrooke, Algonquin
 - Order 4 for Churchill
 - Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher will get quotes and order frames.

- Art work & Photos
 - As part of the UAEP description for Welcoming Environments, it clearly states "Youth will take an active role in the development of materials, taking ownership and creating a sense of belonging to the school."
 - Invite students paint art work at each school.
 - Have paw or hand prints painted on the walls of each entrance to give direction to the main office, library, etc.. The four colours (red, yellow, black, white) would be used.

- Group photos of students (diversity) to hang up
- Frames (misc. sizes & plexiglass) will be purchased – photos/art can be rotated
- Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher will get quotes and order frames.
- Resources / Materials
 - Each school to receive a maximum \$1000 to spend on books
 - Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher to generate appropriate Aboriginal book lists to share with principals
 - Principals can select books from list and amount (i.e. class sets)
 - It will be the principal's choice to order class or small group sets
- Aboriginal Awareness Session 2 (PD for all staff)
 - Reminder to book a session for Carolyn and/or Rachel to present
 - ½ hour presentation at staff meeting – need laptop & screen
- Aboriginal Parent Advocates (information about and use of program)
 - This program is available and ready for use.
 - The Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer has emailed the Advocate contact information out to school administrators.

Budget \$5000 / school

Item	Cost	Algonquin	CD Howe	Churchill	Gron Morgan	Sherbrooke
Mounting maps on hardboard	\$100 / map	\$300	\$300	\$500	\$300	\$300
Books	\$x per	\$3000	\$3000	\$4500	\$4500	\$3000
Brochure Racks	3 tier \$250 4 tier \$325	\$250	\$250	\$325	\$250	\$250
Art Supplies /Cultural Program Honorarium	\$500 per	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Framing for art	\$300 per Misc sizes	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300

Meeting 7: Thursday, May 6, 2010

Update:

- Brochure racks have been installed
- Aboriginal Community Pamphlets - Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher resend letter and forward the contact list of local Community and Aboriginal organizations to principal. Each school will contact organizations to refill rack.
- First Nations Maps have been installed
- Staff PD – Cultural Awareness - Algonquin & Churchill still need sessions. Confirmed for May.

Community Connection – Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer

- LPS Aboriginal role model posters are in progress of confirming Aboriginal youth, adults, and elders that will be in the poster. Once posters have been printed (summer), each school will receive one.
- Additional sets of posters can be purchased by each school.

Posters – Role Models

- Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher brought 10 different types of Aboriginal role model posters (free). These will be laminated and sent to schools for display.

Picture / Art Frames

- Project Coordinator/Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher ordered picture frames for each school with a maximum \$1500 budget (for all 5 schools)
- Picture frames will be made of Plexiglas so schools can use these to display Aboriginal (student) art work.

Aboriginal Resources

- IMC – Aboriginal resources for teachers
- Book lists included:
 - Scholastic – Aboriginal Heritage Resource List (sets / levels)
http://www.clubs.scholastic.ca/education/supp_cat/aboriginal_resources_of_apr09.pdf
 - Scholastic – The 10 (Gr.6-10 high interest/low vocab sets)
http://www.scholastic.ca/education/the_ten/orderinfo.html
 - Scholastic – X-Zone (6-12 high interest / low vocab sets)
<http://www.scholastic.ca/education/x-zone/orderinfo.html>
 - Eagle Crest (primary booklets – leveled)
<http://www.eaglecrestbooks.com/home.htm>
 - Aboriginal Titles at Northern Women’s Bookstore
 - Ogden Aboriginal book list/sets (Denise will share this resource)

Professional Reading: Principals invited to read and share with teaching staff.

- Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching FNMI Learner. (Alberta Education)
<http://education.alberta.ca/media/307199/words.pdf>
 - Aboriginal Student: “ Who are they? How do they learn?
 - School, Family and Community: Sharing the Responsibility

Conclusion

In June 2010, schools purchased numerous books and resources that reflected First Nation, Metis, and Inuit perspective and content. Schools invited members of the Aboriginal community to visit classrooms for art and culture activities. There was flexibility in the program to meeting the unique cultural and demographics of each school. These initiatives attempt to build parental participation by creating environments that are welcoming.

Action Plan / Implementation:

Building bridges and forging partnerships in the community are an integral part of the Urban Aboriginal Education Project. The Aboriginal Community Liaison and Partnerships Officer has served to connect board and school staff with community cultural resource people, Elders, Senator, Aboriginal role models, and partnering agencies who support student success.

**UAEP Professional Development
with the support of Community Partners**

Details/Activity/Event	# of participants	List of Community Partners/Presenters
Engaging Learning in the Classroom Through Community – January 26, 2009	Education Assistants	Elder Gerry Martin
Welcoming Environments Session – January 29, 2009	School secretaries	
Regional PD – Fort William Historical Park – Nurturing Our Learning Spirit April 22, 2010		Elder Gerry Martin
Métis professional development for elementary teachers May 13, 2009	Elementary teachers	Presenter: Scott Carpenter Cost sharing partners: Métis Nation of Ontario, Fort William Historical Park, Neighborhood Capacity Building Project; Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, Lakehead Public Schools, Native Housing, City of Thunder Bay
Cross Cultural Training Session June 25, 2009	35 Secondary EA's 2 Staff 1 Elder	Presenter: Elder Gerry Martin Sessions involved exploring what is culture, diversity, equality, dominant Canadian culture, culture is learned, styles of culture, ethnic politics, values, conflict with culture and medicine wheel teachings
Cross Cultural Training Session November 20, 2009	32 Elementary EA's 2 Staff 1 Elder	Presenter: Elder Gerry Martin Sessions involved exploring what is culture, diversity, equality, dominant Canadian culture, culture is learned, styles of culture, ethnic politics, values, conflict with culture and medicine wheel teachings
Inuit Perspective and Culture	Teachers	Presenter: Paul Berger Lakehead University
Oral Traditional Storytelling “Once	18 French	Presenter: Elder Gerry Martin

Details/Activity/Event	# of participants	List of Community Partners/Presenters
Upon A Time” The origin of oral traditional storytelling, how to engage students, resources, meaning April 20, 2010	teachers 1 Elder 3 Staff	
Cultural awareness training session to staff of Superior North Catholic District School Board April 30, 2010	156 participants	Superior North Catholic District School Board Lakehead District School Board
Cultural Awareness June 25, 2010	39 Elementary and Secondary EAs	Presenters: Elders Gerry Martin and Joy Ashum

The Roles and Responsibilities:

Aboriginal Community Liaison and Partnerships Officer

Provided support to the Aboriginal education initiatives in grades K – 12 by participating in school improvement forums at the system and school levels and worked with classroom teachers, resource teachers, and administrators to implement these initiatives.

Conclusion

Building strong connections and partnerships in the community has resulted in opportunities for student learning by:

- Fostering an appreciation for First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures among all sectors of the community
- Increasing opportunities for knowledge sharing and relationship building among agencies, schools, staff, and community partners
- Increasing confidence and self esteem in Aboriginal students
- Building public confidence and appreciation for establishing community partnerships and parent engagement
- Creating a comfort zone for teachers to invite the community into their classrooms to enhance learning for their students by making authentic connections to the curriculum.

- Developed the Mentorship guidebook.
- Participated in secondary UAEP initiatives.

Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher (Project Manager)– Elementary:

- Facilitated and planned four professional development sessions for elementary teachers.
- Co-presented with Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer in delivering part 2 of the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity professional development to Lakehead staff and teachers.
- Worked at the elbow, weekly, with teachers in 3-5 elementary schools, providing literacy support and encouragement to embed Aboriginal content into instructional planning and assessment practices.
- Participated in review of compiled information for Native Studies/Literacy locally developed course.
- Attended school Professional Learning Community sessions at selected schools.

In 2009-10, the secondary UAEP Professional Development initiatives became the responsibility of the board's Secondary Resource Teacher.

The Aboriginal Education Coordinator (Project Manager)

The Aboriginal Education Coordinator was critical in: supporting the implementation of student achievement initiatives to improve Aboriginal students' literacy and numeracy skills; building capacity for effective instructional, assessment and evaluation practices; delivering professional development "at the elbow" for teachers and support staff; and assisting with the implementation of Board and Ministry initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal Education. The coordinator assisted schools on an individual basis to support administrators and teachers in accessing and embedding Aboriginal perspectives and human resources.

There were numerous duties and responsibilities that the Project Coordinator assumed to ensure that the UAEP initiatives were active, supported, and accomplished. Partnership and ongoing collaboration with stakeholder groups and colleagues was instrumental to the success of the project initiatives.

In support of the outcome and goals of the UAEP initiatives the Project Coordinator:

- Facilitated and presented professional development sessions for teachers
- Participated in resource development
- Facilitated and chaired all meetings with the school administrators involved in the Welcoming Environment program.
- Met regularly with and provided support to staff, including the Special Assignment Teachers.

- Assisted and met with the Grade 10 Civics Module lead and facilitated and presented at Professional Development sessions for all Civics teachers
- Coordinated and compiled the resources and supports for schools. Updated the Aboriginal Education web page – included numerous access / links to Aboriginal education resources and Aboriginal perspectives
- Co-planned literacy training program and provided professional development sessions for educational assistants and school facilitators
- Built capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school board staff.
- Worked with *Learning Through The Arts* to include an Aboriginal artists roster to their program.
- Supported our Aboriginal Education initiatives in grades K - 12.
- Assisted schools on an individual basis (i.e. to implement Aboriginal content into planning and instructional practices).
- Worked collaboratively the Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer and Aboriginal community members.
- On behalf of the Superintendent, Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher / Project Manager regularly attended the Regional Aboriginal Education Superintendent Leads meetings at the Ministry of Education office in Thunder Bay. Information and resource sharing occurred at these meetings, particularly focused on Aboriginal Education and initiatives.

Conclusion

The Aboriginal Education Coordinator role was vital to the successful implementation of the UAEP goals and initiatives, and the Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher roles provided the one-on-one support that was required by staff, teachers, and administrators.

Working with the UAEP Team, the Coordinator provided the organizational overview and attention to detail that was required on a daily basis to manage this very large and wide-ranging project. In addition, the Coordinator was the “face” of the project and served to link the many facets of the project and the many people involved within the board and within the community.

Working collaboratively and partnering with the Aboriginal community has proven to be a very positive result of the close ties that have been fostered through our work and will be sustainable into the future.

Programming in schools		
<p>Algonquin School Planning meeting with Elder Gerry Martin- January 8, 2010 (3 classroom visits for each session – grades 4-7)</p>		<p>Oral teaching sessions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Foods (Elder Mark Sault) – March 12, 2010 – 75 participants – 3 classes • First Nation Music (Elder Gerry Martin) – January 22, 2010 • Traditional Games (Elder Mark Sault) – May 7, 2010 – talked about the traditional game of lacrosse, history of ding balls, along with students participating • Metis History and Culture (Senator Robert McKay, Wendy Landry and Janine Landry) • Traditional Technologies and medicines; Winter Solstice – past and what we use today (Elder Gerry Martin) – December 14, 2009 – calendar was created by students • Storytelling/Legends/Aboriginal heroes and athletes (Elder Gerry Martin – February 11, 2010 • Winter Solstice/storytelling/art (Elder Gerry Martin – December 14, 2009) • Spring traditions, changing seasons, land harvesting (Elder Gerry Martin) – April 9, 2010
<p>St. James School (JK class) June 22, 2010</p>	14	<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Shared a traditional oral story with JK's using props.</p>
<p>Hammarksjold High School (Native Beliefs/Values class and English) April 26, 2010</p>		<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Talked about the traditional way of life pre and post contact and how the cultural belief system was altered by European culture in Canada.</p>
<p>Lakehead Adult Education (Thunder Bay Corrections) April 28, 2010</p>		<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Shared medicine wheel teachings, 7 grandfather teachings and 4 helpers.</p>

<p>Westgate High School (Native Studies – Indigenous world knowledge and issues) January 6, 2010 and April 29, 2010</p>		<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Shared environmental knowledge, traditional knowledge/values, current challenges of economic, social and political natures that have impacted indigenous populations along with cultural pride and identity.</p>
<p>Ecole Gron Morgan School (Parent engagement event) April 29, 2010</p>		<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Shared cultural knowledge with parents ie. Medicine wheel teachings, 7 grandfather teachings along with opening and closing exercises.</p>
<p>Agnew H. Johnston School (Family literacy night) January 27, 2010</p>		<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin Sharing of traditional story/legends with families.</p>
<p>McKellar School – Grades 2 – 6 May and June, 2010</p>	28	<p>Elliott Doxtater Wynn Students had the opportunity to work with an Aboriginal role model and artist. Students had a sense of themselves and an appreciation for Aboriginal culture and art. The last session involved a viewing of the students' art pieces (pictures in documentation binder) at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery which brought community, schools and families together to celebrate.</p>

<p>Elder involvement in professional development sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Cultural Training Session to Secondary Education Assistants (June 25th, 2009 – 38 participants) • Cross Cultural Training Session to Elementary Education Assistants (November 20, 2009 – 35 participants) • Strategies for Teaching Literacy Through Aboriginal Perspective & Resource for Elementary French Immersion Teachers (April 20, 2010 - 18 participants) • Cultural Awareness (June 25, 2010 – 37 Education Assistants and 2 Elders) • Oral Traditional Storytelling to elementary teachers (50) April 22, 2010 	180	<p>1 Elder – Gerry Martin</p> <p>Sessions involved exploring what is culture, diversity, equality, dominant Canadian culture, culture is learned, styles of culture, ethnic politics, values, conflict with culture, medicine wheel teachings, oral traditional and storytelling, cross cultural awareness</p>
--	-----	--

Opening/Closing of Board Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 8, 2008 • December 17, 2009 (Advocacy training) • February 25, 2009 (OFIFC focus group on Ministry of Education Policy Framework) • November 4, 2009 (Advocacy training) • February 4, 2010 (UAEP Steering Committee Breakfast) • June 22, 2010 (Advocacy training) • Nurturing the inner spirit conference April 22, 2010 • Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee May 13, 2010 		1 Elder 1 Senator
YEDE (Youth Embracing Diversity) Conference June 8, 2010		Elder Gerry Martin facilitated 2 cultural learning sessions to secondary students

The Roles and Responsibilities:

Aboriginal Community Liaison and Partnerships Officer:

Provided support to education staff, families and students involved in the Aboriginal education initiatives in Grades K – 12 by liaising and organizing the participation of Elders and Senators.

Provided leadership for the development of the Elder/Senator Protocol for Schools document that guides staff as they engage local Elders in educational activities.

Conclusion

Participation by Elders and Senators has become a common feature in many schools at Lakehead DSB. Staff members feel comfortable with the process, as they are aware of appropriate behaviours for inviting Elders and Senators to become involved in activities, the role they will play, how to access them, and how to acknowledge them and show appreciation. With this positive and very successful beginning, Elders and Senators will continue to provide guidance in a variety of ways as we work to improve achievement for Aboriginal students.

Student mentors discussed the amount of patience it takes to work with primary students.

Planning

Student mentors met with high school staff to determine mentees; and met with elementary school staff to discuss the implementation of the program. Elementary teachers sent home permission forms for students to participate.

Application

Student mentors went to an elementary school every Wednesday to read to and with primary students. Some mentors participated with the same mentee every week and created a bond.

Training

Mentors met with an Elementary Literacy Resource Teacher who provided instruction on reading strategies that they could apply when working with primary students. Student mentors met with the principal of elementary school who gave them a tour of the building.

III. Aboriginal Mentorship – Community Participation

Reflection

Student mentors discussed ideas for further community participation

Planning

Student mentors reviewed the *Aboriginal Presence in our Schools Guide* and found it was very useful for both contact and cultural information.

Application

Student mentors participated in a variety of local community events.

Training

Student mentors used curriculum from NAC 20 to discuss issues in the community.

IV. Aboriginal Mentorship – Career and Post Secondary Education

Reflection

Student mentors discussed their desire to participate in future programs. They looked at their high school courses to make sure they're completing the requirements.

Planning

Student mentors contacted the college and university liaison offices for tour information and asked about specifics on interested courses. Youth Employment Services was contacted to set up a meeting to review job opportunities.

Application

Student mentors met with a coordinator from Negahneewin College and toured the nursing, mechanical and forestry programs. Youth Employment Services also provided information on summer jobs.

Training

Student mentors discuss postsecondary options and First Nations' postsecondary funding options and job opportunities.

The Special Assignment Teacher

The Special Assignment Teachers worked exclusively teaching and working with Aboriginal students in the Mentorship Program and in the Transitions Program, providing support to students as they improved their leadership skills, identifies their academic goals, thereby increasing their confidence.

One Special Assignment Teacher was assigned in each of the four secondary schools.

The Special Assignment Teacher role is diverse and requires a team approach of administration commitment, student services collaboration, and staff support. This role description has been compiled from Special Assignment Teacher Summative reports and combines common themes and duties found system-wide.

Special Assignment Teacher Role

Aboriginal Transitions

- Note: These transitions reflect transition from isolated northern communities for students attending an urban secondary school for the first time.
- Considerations include: provided a welcoming environment, individual interviews after initial registration, orientation tours and planned orientation activities.

Student Mentorship

- Counseled students re: attendance issues, course success and completion
- Facilitated a peer-mentorship program for students focusing on students who were in transition from rural community setting to an urban city setting.

Student Success In-school Support

- Assisted and tracked individual student success for at-risk students
- Monitored absenteeism of at-risk students
- Liaised with teachers and guidance counselors if students have been absent for extended periods of time or have erratic attendance
- Assisted with individual literacy skill development with individual Aboriginal students

External Student Support

- Liaised with boarding parents and families

Community Connections

- Coordinated special events both in-school and outside of school.
- Facilitated (in-school) yearly events such as Fall Harvest and the Community Orientation
- Liaised with First Nations Education Counselors with regards to individual students

Professional Commitments and Involvement at the School-level

- Worked with Student Services to timetable and place students in appropriate programs and courses
- Worked with Student Services to track students during the semester
- Mentored/co-teach with other teachers, particularly Native Studies and Native Language teachers in the school
- Participated on the Cross-Curricular Literacy Committee to assist with embedding Aboriginal content and to improve aboriginal literacy in the school
- Participated in Aboriginal Education and Literacy professional development sessions
- Provided professional development where appropriate and shared information about the program at staff meetings
- Assisted with after-hours community events such as Open House, Literacy Nights, and Diversity Week
- Assisted co-op teachers in finding appropriate work placements for Aboriginal students
- Facilitated Aboriginal resource acquisition
- Completed grant forms (e.g. Student Speak Up) and student nomination forms (e.g. Aboriginal Achievement Awards)
- Facilitated guest speakers within the school

Professional Commitments and Involvement at the System-level

- Worked with Program and other Special Assignment Teachers to improve student success

Community Partnerships

The community was vital in provided additional resources and support to the Special Assignment Teachers and Aboriginal students in the Mentorship Program. Below is a short list of local Aboriginal resources.

- Thunder Bay Art Gallery
- Indian Friendship Center
- Anishinabek Employment and Training Services
- Confederation College
- Multicultural Society
- Great Lake Culture Camps
- Northern Woodlands Ojibway Drum and Dance Group
- Metis Nations of Ontario
- Aboriginal Community Liaison & Partnership Officer
- Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher
- Ahnisnabae Art Gallery
- Seven Generations
- Anishnawbe Mushkiki

Opportunities for students

The Aboriginal students involved in the program had numerous opportunities to develop personal, leadership, and mentorship roles. The following is a list of examples that provided opportunities and activities that students participated in (but by no means was their learning and involvement limited to this):

Elders in the Classroom

- Discussed the value of traditional knowledge
- Discussed the role of First Nations in World Wars and Peacekeeping
- Discussed the purpose and skills involved in oral tradition
- Discussed the traditional medicine wheel and spirituality
- Discussed the protocol and components of Traditional events i.e. Powwows

Community Groups in the classroom

- Led students through the career questionnaires and career paths
- Discussed with students goal setting, challenges, and ambitions for the future both personally and for the community
- Helped the students plan a cultural celebration day and organize workshops
- Arts groups visited and worked with students: Drama/Theatre; Visual Arts; Music (Traditional and Contemporary)

Classroom in the community

- Visited and workshop at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery
- Visited to one of our family of schools and shared student created First Nations stories with primary students
- Weekend leadership and environmental stewardship training opportunities
- Involved in a tour of programs Confederation College
- Involvement in leadership and economic youth training provided by community partner
- Exposure to culturally rich demonstration i.e., plays, presentations, displays

Conclusion

The program ran in all four high schools. The students became aware of the community resources and learned about Aboriginal culture, tradition, and heritage. The Mentorship program provided them the support and opportunity to be more active and involved. The Special Assignment Teachers were instrumental in the success of this program.

This program has had a tremendous impact on the students involved. Over sixty Aboriginal students and several non-Aboriginal students have been actively involved in this program. Each of the students demonstrated some level of personal and academic growth throughout each semester.

Details	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Reference check form • CBC/Annual declaration • Interview screening template • Volunteer confidentiality form • Parent/guardian waiver form • Case study scenario's • Community and Board's info/ resources 	
<p>Community/School outreach that has occurred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness at operations forum and Principles forum • Ongoing feedback from Board's Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee • Awareness session at Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, Aboriginal Interagency Council, Aboriginal Employment Resource Committee, Family Connections • Awareness through school-staff PD • Synervoice • Board's website • Awareness at school-wide staff meetings • School newsletter write-up • Brochure 	2009-2010

Feedback:

"My involvement with the volunteer advocacy representative was pleasant and assuring. It was nice to know that there was someone there for the student and family. A mediator in this situation was comfortable and informative. If I need to do it again or know of someone in need, I would certainly recommend this service to them."

The Roles and Responsibilities:

Aboriginal Community Liaison and Partnerships Officer

Provided support Aboriginal education initiatives in grades K – 12 by participating in school improvement forums at the system-wide and school levels, and worked with classroom teachers, resource teachers, and administrators to implement these initiatives with SMART goals.

Conclusion

With the establishment of a cadre of volunteer advocates, both families and school and system staff can access additional support if they wish to engage an advocate as a support person, helper, friend or interpreter. The Advocate Information handbook clearly outlines the purpose and guiding principles, the roles and responsibilities, protocols, and resources that are available to Aboriginal families and students. The Lakehead Public Schools' Aboriginal Parent/Guardian Advocacy Program will continue to assist Aboriginal families to access support to achieve an understanding of education practices, policies, and procedures; to reach a resolution to concerns regarding their child or children's needs; to connect with community resources; and to become engaged in their child or children's education.

