

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION CIRCLE

June 13, 2024

Zoom online meeting

Melanie Gray, Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Mike Kalfus, Wasauksing First Nation
Sarah Spence, Principal of Student Achievement and Wellbeing
Amanda Mathias, Coordinator Indigenous Education Lead
Kelly Nootchtaï Huston, Coordinator Indigenous Education Lead
Louise Sargent, Trustee
Jo-Anne Groulx, Mattawa Metis Council
Michael Schneider, Acting principal of parry sound intermediate and secondary school
Ashley St. Pierre, Moose Deer Point First Nation
Heidi McMillan, Executive Assistant
Louise Lambert, Direct of Education DOKIS FN
Krista Tucker Petrick, Principal Chippewa Secondary
Sherrill Judge, Shawanaga First Nation
Dan Stevens, Director of Education FNAC
Joann Groulx – MATIS rep

Land Acknowledgement by Principal Spence.

Principal Spence opened with the Land Acknowledgement.

Opening Circle

- Principal Spence welcomed everyone, and introductions were made around the circle.

Agenda, Review, Approval of Minutes/Notes

- Agenda approved by Louise Lambert and seconded by Trustee Sargent.
- March 2nd, 2024, minutes approved by Trustee St. Pierre and seconded by Louise Lambert.

Chippewa Rebranding Committee Consultation – Principal Krista Tucker Petrick

- CSS has been without a name or mascot name for some time. In February this year, the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education directed to move forward with the school's rebranding. This rebranding is done at the school level and the determination of a team name and mascot is to be completed within the school with student and staff voices.
- This process began in April and the Chippewa Rebranding Committee decided that before they had a school mascot, they needed to have a school team name. In May team name suggestions were requested from school students and staff. The data was collected and using the attached criteria a short list of 7 names from 282 suggestions was compiled.
- The Chippewa Rebranding Committee asked to have these names presented to the NNDSB Indigenous Education Circle and Equity Advisor Circle, Nipissing First Nation, the North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre for comment and feedback.

- It was respectfully requested that the names shared during this meeting are kept confidential as they have not been shared with staff and students and would like it to remain that way so there will be a sense of excitement within the school when it comes time to present and vote.

Criteria suggestions are as follows:

1. Make sure to pick an appropriate name (ex: not cultural appropriation, not silly, no vulgar language, not political).
2. Make sure it suits the community of the school.
3. Make sure to use legible handwriting (only relevant if we're doing paper ballots).
4. Seriously consider your suggestion as it needs to be a strong name that continues the positive Chippewa legacy.
5. Do not use the name of a person or group of people. Only suggest an animal, thing or object.
6. Do not suggest a name of any other mascot or team used in the NNDSP, NDA, or North Bay and surrounding area, either past or present.
7. A name that can be used easily when cheering at school activities/events and is catchy in connection with "Chippewa".
8. Consider a name that keeps the colours scarlet & gold in mind.
9. Make sure it does not infringe copyright of any local or national franchises (ex. Blue Jays, Raptors, etc.)
10. The Chippewa Rebranding Committee will create a short list of name suggestions before any outside consultation. All feedback from outside consultation will be given serious consideration.

Short List of Names:

Cardinals, Chargers, Comets, Heat, Jets, Ravens, Thunder.

Invite feedback, comments, anything positive or concerning.

- Principal Spence commented they are professional, not trademark names.
- Principal Tucker Petrick clarified that the Jets is not a trademark name, Jets was selected because of the connection to aviation with the airforce base in North Bay.
- Dan Stevens commented he is partial to double lettering for names. Cardinals, Chargers, Comets having the 'CC' shows some deliberate thought to the process.
- Sherrill Judge made mention that although Cardinal is a bird, it has other meaning and that term can be of harm to Anishinaabeg.
- Trustee Sargent expressed she liked the Ravens and Thunder for choices. Kelly Huston commented that "Thunder" was part of her name and too close to their culture so that one is not a favourite.
- Principal Tucker Petrick made note that "Cardinals" is a bird but also a person in the church so needs to be mindful of how the church treated indigenous people so will take that into consideration when making their shortlist selections.

- The top two names will go head-to-head for a final vote – there will be 2 of the 7 names dropped from this selection list. Principal Tucker Petrick will bring this back to the committee.
- The Committee is made up of two students per grade (12 students), 4 teachers and reps from the black history month committee, pride family, student gov. and a rep from parent council.
- Trustee Sargent posed the question that because some IEC members were not able to attend this meeting, is there some way their voice can be heard if they have some concerns with the names, respecting the confidentiality of the names.
- Principal Spence confirmed that this discussion will be captured in the minutes and forwarded to the IEC so anyone that was not able to attend the meeting can provide feedback.
- Principal Tucker Petrick thanked everyone and appreciated everyone's time spent time. SO Gray thanked Principal Tucker Petrick in this selection process.

Board Action Plan Mid Term Report (Highlights):

Supporting Students

- Had the selection of incoming student trustee 2-year term. Incoming in grade 11 Riley Trudeau will be with us for 2 years. Great process for students to make their selection.
- Acknowledgement of Indigenous Student Trustee Albany Benson's work and her tremendous growth as a leader. Albany received the TD Scholarship for Community Leadership worth \$60,000 for her work in organizing assemblies and events, and for leading the necessities drives for Attawapiskat, which saw thousands of dollars' worth of items collected and sent to northern communities. Bay today also acknowledged her as a community leader both in and out of school.
- Last month of school is when teaching and learning Powwows took place. Two were held at each school, one for school body and the second one for feeder schools to join. Beautiful weather for outdoor ones. Student conduct was fabulous with great participation.
- Teaching and learning powwows were held in collaboration with Geroge Couchie, Franco Nord, Public Nord, NFN.
- Parry Sound Powwow resulted in staff coverage issues, and not all students could participate. Principal Schneider pointed out that some students had their parents excuse them for the day or that period so they could attend the powwow.
- Powwow provided funding for financial support with Wasauksing FN for partnering funds with IYC retreat .
- Student and grad coaches were welcomed by the office of indigenous initiatives. The university was extremely welcoming and offered space for us to stay and for social time, breakfast and sunrise ceremony. President of Nip U indicated it was the largest group hosted for the sunrise ceremony. We have been invited back for the following year.
- School level initiatives – budget almost exhausted, most funding for these specific activities listed on the report were super successful

- iGrad Coaches – highlighted at WFSS – .5 for following year allocated for PS, new members are streamline and focusing parts of the efforts working collaborating setting them up for Aug PD.
- Indigenous Support Transition Workers – lots of positivity through those positions and how to navigate – success of these resulted in 2.0 position. Support of this position, hired in the north and Indigenous social worker and support, Grad Coaches has developed and grown in the understanding of the role and always a necessary position but in conversation who work closely with this person would support the work of the Indigenous support.

Supporting Educators

- April PD Day saw teachers sharing best practices by engaging in those activities and were able to learn from their colleagues – next steps unit planning.
- Panel discussion with George Couchie where each panel was given a timeframe to share their themes.
- Apr 17 – Indigenous Language Teachers collaborated one day workshop that was Specific for Indigenous language teachers.
- Apr 23 – Pam Toulous invited back for Leadership managers.
- Bones of Crows - hosted a voluntary admin study over a 5-week period that participated in conversations around the – “Bones of Crows” series. The mandate required you to be there every week, sharing the story and connection to Indigenous history.
- Additional qualifications courses were offered to teaching staff - \$500 subsidy with Aug. 31st deadline.
- Nip U – engagement summer learning animating the land – Nbisiing mathematics. Offer to subsidize those as well.
- Planning for 2024-25 school year PD - Supporting staff curriculum, teacher hired outside to have Robinson Huron Treaty, vet through communities, goal to support summer working writing team.
- Open door pilot project working on Gr 7/8 history units reflective of Indigenous people and their voice. Just at the cusp of the development of that for 2024-25.

Data and Data Analysis/ Administration/Guidelines

- Principal Spence consulted youth for their voice on a pocketbook on discrimination as a guide to responding to discrimination brought to students for feedback.
- Principal Walking is working with youth and what they would like to see in their school. This process is involved and very interactive.
- Not much change with self ID policy yet. Drafting of admin guidelines.
- Lastly nothing different in key partnerships with powwow's and just coming to Indigenous people's day. Finalizing a robust list for staff and students in connection with Indigenous people's day. Kelly Huston is finalizing a package that will go out with staff to be used in the following weeks.

Community Engagement

Terms of Reference

- Principal Spence - Terms of Reference dated 2021 was brought forward to review Jan 25, 2023. There are gaps between Jan. and the March meeting where it was deferred to this meeting, as it states in the last minutes it was forwarded to the Director. SO Gray suggested with the change in Executive Assistant to reach out to Maureen Egan in the Directors office, move forward with yearly review and any suggestions can be addressed. It was decided to wait until the new school year to do the annual review and align the format of these terms of reference with other terms.

Niigaan Gdizhaami Grant Update

- NG Grant with Wasauksing: Lisa Ross continues her work within the schools in the West. Some of the many highlights include; supporting 7/8 ribbon skirt/shirt making alongside staff within PSHS and shaker making at PSPS alongside the Indigenous Language teacher within that school.
- Bo Yih Thom PD with Indigenous Language Teachers and staff in the West. This presentation was based on compassion fatigue, communication strategies and intersectionality. The grant supported facilitator fees, a catered meal and wellness gifts for staff.

Indigenous Youth Circles Updates

- The Indigenous Youth Circle attended their retreat in May at Nipissing University. The grant supported honorariums for elders who attended the Sunrise ceremony with the Youth, Nathalie Restoule facilitated a workshop on "Healthy Relationships" and prepared cedar tea for participants to give themselves a cedar sponge bath.
- Honorariums for National Indigenous History Month and Indigenous People's Day presentations - Cree Language Learning with Lorraine Sutherland, Author visits from local author of "What's in a Bead?" Kelsey Borgford, Brenda Roberts medicine making with students at Silver Birches and Woodland PS.
- Both Authors are NNDSB graduates.

Community Partner Updates (Circle)

- Mike Kalfus added that Wasauksing School created a program to make wood skirts to be presented to NNDSB schools. Hoping to continue this work and apply for 3 grants.
- Lisa is currently in the ITEP program at Queen's for developing language teachers in the west and excited to welcome her in the future as a language teacher and educator and similar role capacity next year.
- Jo-anne Groulx thanked NNDSB – excited to see how everything is coming together and allowing us to be part of it.
- Lois Lambert – June 14th fashion show exhibited pieces sewn by the JK-Gr4 students – June 26 - DOKIS powwow – community year end dinner showcased student successes

and a sendoff to students. Only one grade 8 graduated this year and no grade 12's. It was a quiet year in DOKIS this year for graduation.

- Principal Schnieder said the Powwow was a wonderful event and was very proud and honoured to be a part of it.
- SO Gray would like to move forward with FNAC in person as much as possible for the new year.

NNDSB Updates – Superintendent Melanie Gray & Indigenous Chair Ashley St. Pierre

- **Chair St. Pierre** - Moose Deer has been quiet – no grads in Grade 8, three in high school and going to college, getting application for jobs for student's gr 9 to gr 12. Board report – newly elected as chair – big decision to take it on but happy to do it. Lots of projects and things on the move and learning the role.
- **Trustee Sargent** - Extended congrats to Trustee St. Pierre as being Chair, and Trustee Howard Wesley as Vice Chair in the nomination process. Shout out to Albany – and her growth and look forward to the progress of Albany Benson and Dora Chen – exciting futures. Look forward to welcoming Riley next year. Tremendous growth having Indigenous student trustee on board and IYC has come up with a winning way of selecting the person. It's encouraging to see that and looking forward to working alongside them.
- SO Gray thanked everyone for the reports and congratulated Chair St. Pierre on her new role. Looking forward to the upcoming year. There are going to be new learning experiences for next year with additional course offerings, another test similar to the literacy test, and new compulsory courses in geography and tech.
- Sherill Judge posed the question to Trustee St. Pierre - Does this open your previous seat as Indigenous Trustee? Chair St. Pierre explained she will still retain the Indigenous Trustee seat. Trustee Sargent clarified that if Chair/Trustee St. Pierre retains that position and takes on the additional role - it doesn't leave the seat vacant. Trustee St. Pierre addressed concerns that the Indigenous voice may be lost and assured she will remain flexible to address and speak on Indigenous matters.

New Business

No new business.

Next Meeting Date – Principal Spence

To be determined.

Closing Circle

No further comments.