Changing Classrooms Through Capacity Building

A vision without a task is a dream; a task without a vision is drudgery; but a vision with a task can change the world.”

~Black Elk, Oglala Sioux
Our presentation will be comprised of four parts:

1. How our Division has developed and framed the structure we feel is necessary to change classrooms through capacity building.
2. An overview of the strategies that are being developed.
3. Next steps for our Division
4. Questions
Wolf Creek Public Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

Wolf Creek Public Schools exists to:

Ensure that each student is a successful learner for a lifetime.

Therefore,

Each member of our organization is committed to developing the skills to create learning environments that are respectful of individual needs, nurturing in focus, and centered on exemplary educational practices.
Building Systemic Supports
Who Are We?

- 7600 students K-12
- Approx 412 teachers and 350 support staff
- 30 schools in total: 20 regular schools, 3 outreach schools, 5 Hutterite colonies, 1 district behavior program, 1 school at the brain injury clinic
- 556 First Nations, Metis, Inuit Students 339 in the Ponoka Sector schools
WCPS District Teams

Inclusive Learning Services
- Assistant Superintendent
- Director
- District Social Worker
- Psychologists
- Coordinators
- FNMI Student Success Coordinator
- PUF Coordinator
- Assistive Technology

Learning Services
- Assistant Superintendent
- Director
- Coordinators

Technology Services
- Director
- Network Analysts
- Support Analysts
- Software Support
School Teams

CRM Teams
- Teachers
- Admin
- School Social Workers
- Inclusion coaches
- EA’s

Intervention Teams
- Teachers
- Admin
- School Social Workers
- Inclusion coaches
- FNMI Success Coordinator
Aligned Calendar

WOLF CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2016 - 2017 School Year

Legend:
- PTI In-Lieu days
- Statutory & Other Holidays
- Teachers' Convention
- School Opening/Closing
- Holidays
- Staff Collaboration Days
- Staff Planning Days

Approved
2/18/2016
Pyramid of Intervention - 4 Tiered Model

Tier 4
Intensive School Interventions
Intensive interventions at the Tier 4 level are individualized and determined by an individual program plan developed for students by a collaborative team. At this Tier, outside resources, agencies and diagnostic testing may be accessed.

Tier 3
School Interventions
Tier 3 interventions are supports delivered by professionals other than the classroom teacher. These can be designed to support students across multiple classes and grade levels and ideally are designed to be delivered inclusively in the classroom.

Tier 2
Classroom Interventions
Tier 2 interventions are provided to students by the classroom teacher, inclusive in the classroom. By articulating these interventions school-wide, teachers essentially collaborate to share differentiated strategies that work for students.

Tier 1
Classroom Instruction
Effective research-based instruction is foundational for success for students and essential when implementing school-based intervention models. Tier 1 honors and recognizes the essential work of teachers in the classroom.
WCPS Pyramid of Interventions
Finding Our Way
“What is good for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students is good for all students. However, what is good for all students is not necessarily good for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students.”

~Dr. Russell Bishop

Project Director
The Kotahitanga Research and Professional Development Project
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Success Coordinator

Reporting and Working Relationships
- Reports Directly to the Assistant Superintendent, Inclusive Learning Services
- Role is divided between three Ponoka schools and includes ongoing collaboration and coordination with Ponoka principals, staff and community.

Performance and General Responsibilities
- Work closely with FNMI students to implement coordinated academic planning and support.
- Provide coaching support to staff to meet FNMI programming needs.
- Coordinate literacy strategies to support staff to meet FNMI programming needs.
- Coordinate professional development opportunities to enhance cultural and programming support.
- Coordinate cultural activities and events.
- Support school staff to provide career and post-secondary counseling support for FNMI.
- Chair Wisdom and Guidance Committee.
- Work with Superintendency Team regarding focus of the Wisdom and Guidance Committee.
- Continue to enhance the Elder Program and Cree Language instruction.
- Explore Cree language options.
- Prepare FNMI reports and data as required for WCPS.
- Continue to fulfill the requirements of the Alberta Education FNMI pilot project.
- Be a liaison with families of WCPS FNMI students.
- Key contact and coordinator for AANDC.
- Support Ponoka schools with interventions for FNMI students in the areas of academics, attendance, behavior and transitions.
Areas of Focus

First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Programming

Components:

- Data
- Literacy
- Elder Program
- Student Achievement
- Intake Process
- Educator Capacity
- Montana First Nations BCCE Grant
- Parent & Community Engagement
- SSW & IC Support
- CRM
Elder Program
Elder Program

Purpose is to build common understanding around FNMI culture and build capacity of staff, teachers, and administrators to increase student success.

“The Aboriginal Healing Foundation describes an Elder as: ‘[S]omeone who is considered exceptionally wise in the ways of their culture Elder Protocol and Guidelines 10 and the teachings of the Great Spirit. They are recognized for their wisdom, their stability, their humour and their ability to know what is appropriate in a particular situation. The community looks to them for guidance and sound judgment. They are caring and are known to share the fruits of their labours and experience with others in the community.”
Elder Program
Wisdom and Guidance Committee
Wisdom and Guidance Committee

Project Overview: The Wisdom and Guidance Committee will provide an opportunity for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Elders, parents, and students to meet with Wolf Creek School Personnel to discuss issues related to student success. Guidance and recommendations from the committee will be considered by the Superintendent of the Wolf Creek Public School Division.
Wisdom and Guidance Committee

Talking Circle Protocols (taken from Our Words, Our Ways- Alberta Education 2005)

- Participants sit in a circle, which symbolizes completeness.
- Everyone’s contributions are equally important.
- People should say what they feel or believe, beginning with “I- statements (for example, “I feel that…”)
- All comments should directly address the question or the issue, not comments another person has made. Both negative and positive comments about what others say should be avoided.
- A feather, rock or talking stick will be used as a talking object.
- When the talking object is placed in someone’s hands, it is that person’s turn to share his or her thoughts, without interruption. The object is then passed to the next person in a clockwise direction.
- Whoever is holding the object has the right to speak, and others have the responsibility to listen.
- Everyone listens in a nonjudgmental way.
- Silence is an acceptable response. There must be no negative reaction to the phrase, “I pass.”
- Speakers should feel free to express themselves in any way that is comfortable to them (for example, sharing a story or personal experience, using examples of metaphors).
Wisdom and Guidance Committee

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Parental Engagement

- Provide guidance on strategies to improve programming for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students within Wolf Creek School Division.

- Provide guidance on strategies to infuse culture into the schools such as Elder programs and cultural days.
Wisdom and Guidance Committee

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Parental Engagement

The committee's roles include:

- Identify issues, gaps, and barriers to Aboriginal students receiving equitable access to services across the school district and identify strategies to address these issues.

- Provide Cultural Teachings and Awareness to Educators and students to deepen the understanding of First Nations people.
Leadership Capacity Building
The phrase “building capacity”—a widely used bit of education jargon—refers to any effort being made to improve the abilities, skills, and expertise of educators.
Obstacles

- Misunderstanding the need for change
  - Connecting the Heart to the mind
- Fear of the unknown
  - Risks
- Lack of competence
  - How do I gain the skills needed
- Connected to the old way
  - Shifting mindsets and understanding another worldview
"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."

William Arthur Ward
District Office Support Team

“Leadership is not about a title or a designation. It’s about impact, influence and inspiration. Impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading the passion you have for your work, and you have to inspire team-mates.”

~Robin Sharma
WCPS Board of Trustees

Blanket Activity

Ensuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit Student Success

Leadership through Governance
Building Capacity

Administration

There are no good schools without good principals.
It just doesn’t exist.
And where you have good principals, great teachers come, and they stay, they work hard, and they grow.

— Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education
Learning Roadmap: The Learning Plan is intended to support foundational knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Understanding historical, social, economic, and political implications</th>
<th>Supporting Student Achievement</th>
<th>Program of Study Connect</th>
<th>First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Resources</th>
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<td>Possible PD activities</td>
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Building Educator Capacity
Building Capacity

“If a child can not learn from the way we teach, we should teach from the way they learn.”
Building Educator Capacity

Focus:

- To learn about the history and current reality of the Maskwacis community.
- To identify strategies to help relate to students, and their families.
- To develop an understanding around meeting the needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners in the classroom.
- To develop resources and strategies to ensure culturally responsive education opportunities exist for all students.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit- Task Force Cohort
Inclusive Learning Services

“We need to create environments that support belonging and inclusiveness that are safe for the most marginalized students in the school.”

~Dr. Martin Brokenleg

12 Components of ELEs

4. Proactive, including a positive behavior support framework
5. Utilization of rubrics & exemplars
6. Instruction of new knowledge
7. Experiencing and developing of new knowledge
8. Developing an understanding of new knowledge
9. Tracking and communicating achievements of outcomes
10. Assessment of effectiveness
11. Additional support and re-intervention
12. Externally-driven development

School Social Worker

CRMS Software

Pyramid of Interventions

Tier 4
Intensive School Interventions

Tier 3
School Interventions

Tier 2
Classroom Interventions

Tier 1
Classroom Instruction

RCSD

Inclusion Coaches

"The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other. Without collaboration, our growth is limited to our own perspectives."

--- Robert John Meehan
School Social Workers & Inclusion Coaches

Poverty Simulation
Website & Resources

Wolf Creek Public Schools Website

Information
- Walking Together: FNMI Perspectives in Curriculum
- Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Metis and Inuit Learners
- Empowering the Spirit: FNMI Education
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
- Nitaskinan

Resources
- Provincial FNMI Professional Learning Project
- Education is our Buffalo - ATA
- FNMI Collaborative Framework: Building Relationships
- FNMI Literacy and Numeracy Promising Practices
- Moving Forward: Implementing FNMI Collaborative Frameworks
- Our Way Is a Valid Way: Educator Resource
- Our Words, Our Ways

Curriculum Resources
- ARPDC FNMI Moodle Resources - Grade 1-12 Curriculum Support
- Literacy Seed Kit
The "rainbow" concept comes into play when the kit takes a detailed look at the different kinds of literacy for Aboriginal people.

They colour code as follows:

- **Red**: Mother Tongue Literacy
- **Orange**: Oral Literacy
- **Yellow**: Literacy of Symbolism
- **Green**: English and/or French Literacy
- **Blue**: Literacy Using Technology 2
- **Indigo**: Spiritual Literacy
- **Violet**: Holistic Literacy
Partnership Agreement

Building Collaboration and Capacity in Education Grant

Montana First Nation

Wolf Creek Public Schools  Creating Success For All Learners
Building Educator Capacity
Ponoka Elementary School

Participation in a sweat
Challenged with “Brain Game”
Upcoming “Blanket Activity”
Upcoming Field Trip
Cultural camp
PD: Talking Circle
Building Educator Capacity
Ponoka Secondary Campus

Resources

Maskwacis Tour

Why Students Don’t Attend, Are Late, Are Driven, Eat when they get to school….

Student Stories

Staff at Josephs for a Sweat

Resources
Building Educator Capacity
Ponoka Outreach School

Building Literacy

FNMI training at PD - building deeper understanding instead of just using a generic Medicine Wheel.

Staff turnovers are influencing educator capacity. We look forward to increasing depth of understanding.

Staff Sweats

Suicide prevention training with Mascwacis Young Spirit Winds Society
Engaging Learners
Student Engagement
Nitohtahwin Gathering

NEWS
Wolf Creek schools seeks insight from First Nations students

First Nations student Brynne Louis places a card on a dream catcher Friday, June 19 during an event co-hosted by Wolf Creek Public Schools and First Nations elders. The day was about getting feedback from First Nations students about their learning and culture. — Image Credit: Photo By Jeffrey Heyden-Kaye
Wolf Creek Public Schools

Nitohatwin Gathering

Listen to Me

Physical
What does it look like when you belong in your school?

Mental
If you only had one resource that would support your learning, what would it be? What if you could change one thing about how your time was spent in the classroom, what would it be?

Emotional
I wish my teachers would understand....

Spiritual
What is holding you back from learning at your best?
The Journey of Reconciliation

"We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing." ~ Justice Murray Sinclair.
Questions