

JUNE 2021



DSBN Indigenous Education Update





Letter from the Director of Education

The DSBN is committed to working with Indigenous partners, communities and families to continue improving Indigenous student achievement and well-being, as well as increasing all students' knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, contributions, perspectives, and current realities.

Strong partnerships between DSBN schools, educators, families, students, community organizations, and Indigenous partners are essential. Everyone deserves to be celebrated and included, and everyone should have their own positive sense of belonging.

We are always looking to improve, as we work towards creating positive, long-term change. We know that one way to influence this change is through education. You'll see evidence of our efforts in this document summarizing some of the many projects we've undertaken during this school year. We, at the DSBN, acknowledge that further education and ongoing reconciliation is of vital importance to continue to bring the truths of history forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Hoshizaki'.

Warren Hoshizaki
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Supporting Students

For the 2020–2021 school year, the total number of Self-Identified Indigenous students in DSBN elementary schools is 744 and in secondary schools is 326 students for a total of 1070 students.

INSIGHTS FROM DSBN STUDENT TRUSTEES

Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to become more involved within the DSBN as their Indigenous Student Trustee. I have had the most welcoming and educational experience that I know I will carry through with me for the rest of my education as well as even future careers. This position has allowed me to be an active advocate for Indigenous student voices within the DSBN. I was able to attend many workshops which taught me so much about my culture and allowed me new learning experiences that I would've never have learned without this opportunity. This has most definitely been such a unique experience especially with the COVID-19 pandemic and not being able to meet people face to face. I was lucky enough to work on my presenting skills as well as organization skills. Overall I will be sad to be moving on but wish the best for the next trustees in our upcoming year and want to give a big thank you to everyone who has helped me along the way including the other two student trustees.

- KEELEE HOLLOWELL,
DSBN INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE 2020–21

The role of the Indigenous Student Trustee really sparked my interest as an urban Indigenous DSBN student. I decided to run for the position because I believe that representation is imperative. This role would give me the opportunity to amplify the concerns and needs of Indigenous students across Niagara. My hopes for the upcoming school year is to contribute to creating an inclusive space for students and to support the Indigenous population at the board with their journey of self identification. I'm super excited to learn about the different structures at a higher level and can't wait to get started!

- KYA PARKER-STEINBACH,
DSBN INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE 2021–2023

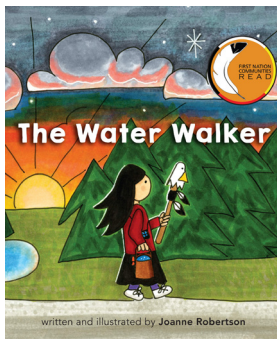
The Water Campaign

The Indigenous Education Team in consultation with the community, prepared integrated and comprehensive literacy/ social studies/science and history lessons based on the books Nibi's Water Song and The Water Walker. This engaging resource required both educators and students to think critically about our most precious resource – water.

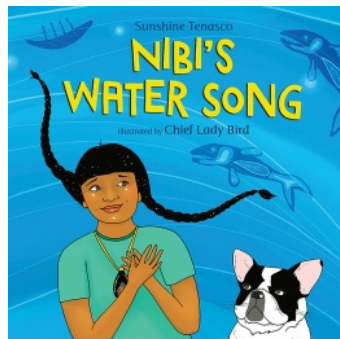
AT THE OUTSET WE DEFINED OUR LEARNING GOALS:

1. As part of our education for reconciliation, we need to raise awareness of the importance of water and that many Indigenous communities do not currently have access to clean water in Canada.
2. We need to activate youth voice and to advocate for the rights of water.
3. We need to promote the values of conservation and sustainability of our most important resource.

The project was highly successful with more than 300 K-2 and 470 Grade 3-8 educators using the resource with their students. The voices of our educators and students clearly demonstrate that we met our 3 goals.



THE WATER WALKER
by Joanne Robertson



NIBI'S WATER SONG
By Sunshine Tenasco

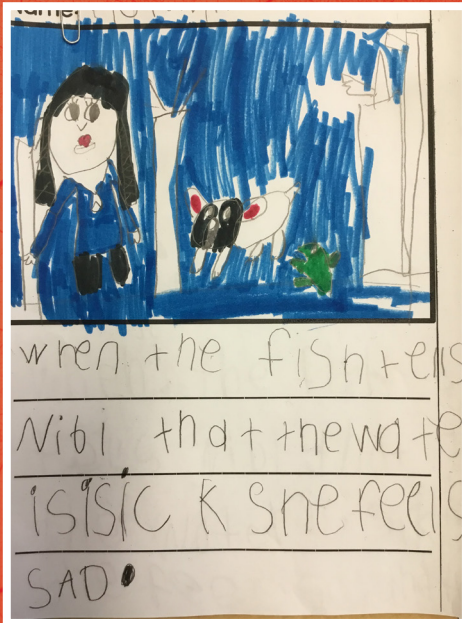


Virtual retelling kit of the "fish part" of the story, Nibi's Water Song.

EDUCATORS' FEEDBACK ABOUT THE WATER CAMPAIGN

"Students were very engaged during several readings of the book. They enjoyed doing some writing to reflect on how Nibi felt and retelling the story in a First then, next, finally, guided writing activity. Students especially enjoyed the opportunity to use the loose parts kit with our document camera. They added tiny post-it note signs to help Nibi protest to get her clean water."

—ORCHARD PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER



Students enjoyed a guided writing activity.

do not fit the typical definition of “water”. All of the non-examples are affected by water (e.g., through the way they are harvested, processed, used). It was great to see the growth of the students learning based on the *Water Walker* book to add more characteristics and examples from when we first began.”

—GRADE 7/8, ROSS PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

“Here is a [google slides presentation](#) of our virtual experience with “*The Water Walker*”. Thank you so much!”

—DSBN VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEACHER

The Team also worked with the authors of both these books so educators and students could learn directly from them and extend the learning beyond the book. Sunshine Tenasco, author of Nibi’s *Water Song* and Joanne Robinson author of *The Water Walker*, recorded personal and inspiring messages for our DSBN Students. Click here if you would like to listen. [Nibi’s Water Song](#). [The Water Walker](#)

“My students enjoyed being able to recreate the “fish part” of the story because they felt that was when the ‘solution’ began. Here are 2 pictures of a virtual retelling kit created.”

—DSBN VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEACHER

“I have one of those beautiful teaching stories to share about doing the *Water Walker* lessons with my adorable grade 4s this week. Yesterday it rained for a few minutes. The kids were quietly working on math when it started to rain. One of the kids noticed the rain and got so excited, “It’s Nibi!”. All the kids ran to the window, “Look at nibi!”, “Look at the little flowers! Nibi is making the flowers grow”, “Look at the clouds” etc.... they were all so delighted! They watched the rain. It was just so sweet to see.”

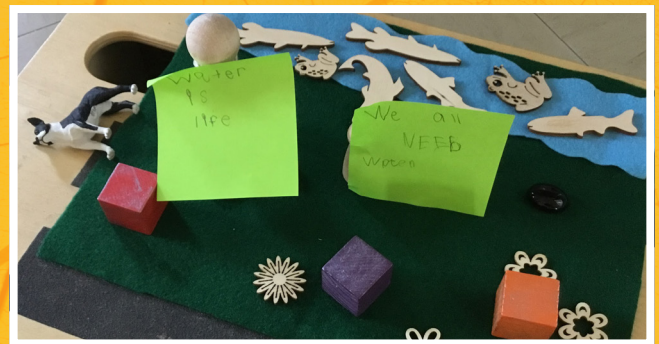
—WESTMOUNT PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

“To begin the *Water Walker*, our class brainstormed what “water” is by using a Frayer Model. We circled back to our brainstorming at the end of the book to see how our definition, characteristics, examples and non-examples changed. There was an agreement that all of our “non-examples” still currently

DEFINITION: -a liquid we need to survive -usually clear and tasteless -an area of liquid (lakes, oceans, ponds, seas)	CHARACTERISTICS: liquid tasteless clean dirty wet colourless clear/translucent loud calm turbulent
EXAMPLES: drinking } consuming cooking river, lake, ocean, water fall, rain hygiene: shower, sink, brushing teeth washing machine, dishwasher enjoyment: swimming gardening hydro power human cells, organisms running water, taps, wells	NON-EXAMPLES: rocks bricks clothing: shirts, shoes bottles paper backpack marker pencils gas/oil

Left: Brainstorming what water is by using the Frayer Model.

Bottom: Students using post-its to help Nibi protest.



BRINGING THE LOVE OF LACROSSE TO DSBN SCHOOLS

Lacrosse equipment was purchased for 20 DSBN elementary schools as part of a 3-year pilot to have all elementary schools outfitted with lacrosse equipment. All secondary schools are now fully equipped with lacrosse equipment. ILA Sports, a Six Nations owned company, won the procurement bid.

The kits included competition-level equipment to allow more schools to offer extracurricular lacrosse teams. Unit lessons have been completed to support educators in teaching lacrosse when in-person learning resumes.

Janice Rice, Vice Principal of Garrison Road Public School (pictured right) shows her enthusiasm at receiving the equipment!



Janice Rice,
Vice Principal of
Garrison Road
Public School

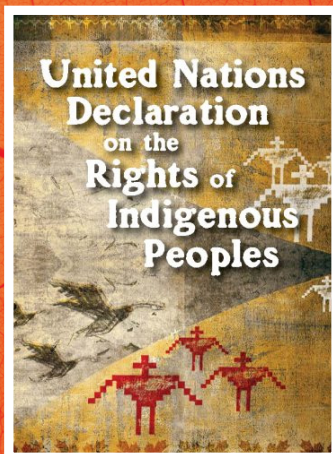
“Three things that I would like to further explore or try in school are some of the games. For example I would like to try lacrosse, the peach pit game, and double ball. I would also like to learn more about the different languages spoken within the Six Nations.”

—QUOTE FROM STUDENT



Birch Bookshelf on wheels to store Indigenous titles.

Schools were provided with additional copies of “The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



INDIGENOUS AUTHORS SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

To continue to build on our resources by Indigenous authors, we carefully selected more Indigenous Authored Texts to support student engagement and learning. All our schools have received a Birch Bookshelf on wheels to store Indigenous titles so that teachers can easily borrow them for their class. In addition, we have created a curated list of over 100 Indigenous Authored Texts and resources with accompanying live links of resources to support educators with Indigenous content. A selection of these books has been provided to each of our elementary schools.

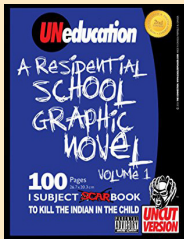
RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

Twenty-one grade 5 & 6 students in the Silver Birch and Yellow Cedar Forest of Reading Book Clubs joined David A. Robertson for a virtual talk about his book, *The Barren Grounds*. Robertson spoke about how he drew inspiration from C.S. Lewis and the legends and storytelling traditions of his Cree heritage to write this story. He also spoke about how he wove in important themes

of environmentalism, friendship, and the foster care system. In speaking about his writing process and the motivation behind this work, Robertson commented that it was important for Indigenous children to see themselves reflected in mainstream literature and for non-Indigenous readers to read about rich Indigenous characters who have agency over their lives.

Books and ebooks by Indigenous authors were sent to all secondary schools.

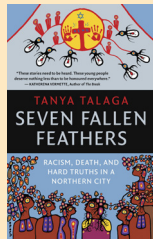
Books that really resonated with students this year were:



UNeducation, Vol 1: A Residential School Graphic Novel (UNCut) Paperback



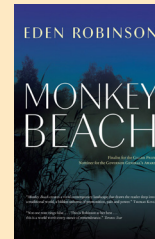
Cottagers and Indians by Drew Hayden Taylor



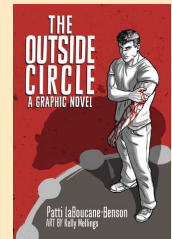
Seven Fallen Feathers by Tanya Talaga



This Place: 150 Years Retold



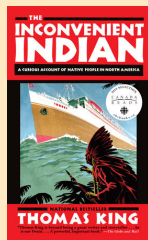
Monkey Beach by Eden Robinson



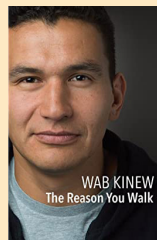
The Outside Circle by Laboucane Benson



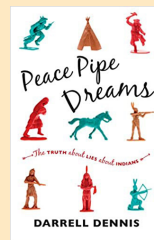
The Night Wanderer by Drew Hayden Taylor



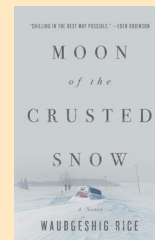
Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King



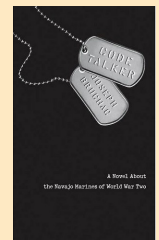
The Reason You Walk by Wab Kinew



Peace Pipe Dreams by Darrell Dennis



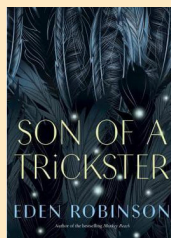
Moon of The Crusted Snow by Waubgeshig Rice



Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac



From the Ashes by Jesse Thistle



Son of a Trickster by Eden Robinson



The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline



Poetry by Duke Redbird



Mark Zelinski donated 100 copies of his book, "The Heart of Turtle Island" to be shared in the libraries of all of our schools.

School Social Worker, Indigenous Students:

- Connected families and students to Indigenous supports in the community
- Provided evidence-based therapeutic interventions to students with mental health concerns
- Bridged relationships between staff and Indigenous families
- Provided consultation to DSBN staff (social workers, administrators, educators) to provide an Indigenous perspective
- Reached out to and engaged Indigenous students with attendance concerns

Indigenous Advisor:

- Provided care and connection for Indigenous students, virtually, by phone, and in-person
- Assisted Indigenous students and their families by encouraging community integration for wellness and belonging
- Monitored well-being and academic success with phone calls and emails to families during remote learning
- Home "porch visits" to deliver support materials

Indigenous Re-engagement and Graduation Coach:

- Supported secondary Indigenous youth by offering academic support, guidance, and coaching with virtual office hours 1-3 Monday through Friday
- Contacted all Grade 9 students to check-in and assist students in need of academic support and coaching
- Connected with and coached students who are in their graduating year to develop goals and timelines as they move towards graduation
- Collaborating with community members and community organizations, with a focus on ensuring students are aware of opportunities and community events and have access to information, registration, etc.
- A central D2L support page was created for secondary Indigenous students to share opportunities and events both within the DSBN and from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit community partners.
- Monitored, maintained, and updated the DSBN Secondary Indigenous Student Community D2L page



GRADUATION MOCCASINS: In May, 30 graduating students participated virtually in making their own Graduation Moccasins with the support of Mandi Montour.

INDIGENOUS ART WORKSHOP: In partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 500 secondary students had the opportunity to virtually explore the art work of Métis Artist Christi Belcourt and/or participate in an Indigenous Art Workshop.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS: An Indigenous Youth Career Planning Conference run by NPAAMB had 22 DSBN students register. Many more students from the DSBN registered via community.

INSPIRING CREATIVITY: Art Kits were shared with each school offering NACIO. Kits included: acrylic paints, paint brushes, soapstone, markers, a carving set, canvas, a sketchbook, and graphite pencils to help students as they were learning from home.

OYAP CULTURALLY-RELEVANT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program supports the engagement of Indigenous youth in the exploration of skilled trades through culturally relevant experiential learning related to First Nations and Métis peoples. Students were engaged in hands-on activities with Indigenous mentors on-line and completed projects utilizing supplied material kit. The focus of these events was to generate opportunities for Indigenous students to learn more about OYAP and apprenticeship, including opportunities to engage with Indigenous mentors, apprentices or journeypersons. This year, DSBN hosted two virtual workshops for students to participate in:

The first activity was “Exploring your Future while Learning about the Métis”. Thirty-five students participated in building a model and also heard about skilled trade opportunities from NPAAMB and OYAP representatives.

The second activity “Exploring your Future with Traditional Birch Bark Canoe Making”, connected 60 students and family members with Master Birch Bark Canoe Maker Chuck Commanda. He guided students as they built mini-canoes from traditional materials while talking about traditions and sustainability.

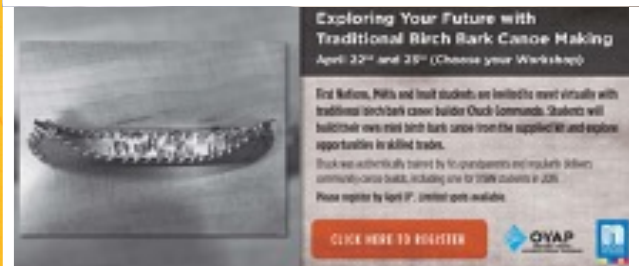
The Canoe Kit included:

- Birch bark cutout, willow twigs, sinew cord and darning needle
- Healthy snack from Indigenous Caterer
- OYAP Promotional Package (brochure, stress reliever, tape measure, treat)

Chuck Commanda, Algonquin Master Birch Bark Canoe Maker, leading the workshop via Microsoft Teams (pictured right).



The DSBN hosted two virtual workshops: “Exploring Your Future While Learning About The Métis” and “Exploring Your Future With Traditional Birch Bark Canoe Making”



Students were engaged in hands-on activities with Indigenous mentors on-line and completed projects using a supplied material kit.

Exploring Your Future while Learning about the Métis

Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 3:30pm

First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are invited to meet virtually with Indigenous Community Members and Entrepreneurs and the Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board to explore opportunities in skilled trades while building your own model of a culturally significant Red River Cart.

In partnership with Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board (NPAAMB), Mulberry Design and Engraving, Laura's Custom Cabinet and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP).

Please register by November 12th. Details will be sent to you along with a kit of all materials for the workshop.





Dallas Squires



A class set and teaching materials were sent to each secondary school for use in School to Community and Health and Physical Education courses.

COLLABORATIONS WITH DALLAS SQUIRES

The Curriculum Team worked with Dallas Squires and lacrosse players to create teaching materials. Lacrosse equipment was purchased for all secondary schools.

Dallas Squires provided lessons to secondary students in the spring about First Nations games. A class set of teaching materials and game kits including hand-made Bone and Toggle sets and Mini Double Ball Sticks were provided for School to Community and Health and Physical Education courses.

Next year, we will work with knowledge keepers to continue student learning and engagement with Métis and Inuit games.



In conversation with Kanahus Manuel & Isaac Murdoch



Kanahus Manuel and Isaac Murdoch presentation to Secondary students and recording for future resource development

INCREASE IN INDIGENOUS COURSES: Secondary offerings expanded to include NAC 20 at Greater Fort Erie. There was an increase of 12 Indigenous Education sections offered this year with GFESS replacing ENG 3U/3C with NBE 3U/C for all students. School Councils at AN Myer and Stamford supported having NBE as the mandatory English course for Grade 11 starting in September 2021, joining DSBN Academy and Greater Fort Erie Secondary Schools.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: In a presentation to secondary students, Kanahus Manuel and Isaac Murdoch discussed underlying land title, resource extraction and violence against Indigenous peoples, colonialism and climate change, and solidarity and action. A recording of the event is available to teachers and will be used as a resource.

Did you know?

- There continues to be a focus on embedding Indigenous authored texts into all grade levels of English and across curriculum areas.
- Over 730 students are enrolled in Indigenous credit courses, an increase from last year.
- Mohawk Language elearning course was offered in Semester 2 for students across DSBN.



Supporting Educators

DSBN fully-funded the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples – Understanding Traditional Teachings, Histories, Current Issues and Cultures, Part 1 AQ Course, was well subscribed, with 30 elementary, secondary teachers and administrators in the winter session and 23 teachers and administrators participate in the spring session.

Guests from Indigenous communities joined in on many occasions to support and enrich the learning process. Invited guests included Nick Bertrand, Tauni and Aalpi Sheldon, Jennifer Parkinson and Dr Ruth Beatty, Naomi Smith, Amanda Pont-Shanks, Karl Dockstater, Niigaan Sinclair, Michael White, Dr. Robyn Bourgeois, David A. Robertson, and Fallon Farinacci.

“Each and every speaker was so **captivating and inspiring** to listen to and brought such **unique and valuable knowledge** to the course. The resources shared in each module were incredibly helpful.”

— QUOTE FROM AN EDUCATOR

“I did not expect to have a life altering experience in an AQ course. The vulnerability gives us a sense of humanity and reminds us to be good humans. Learning is instantly applicable to our classrooms. Just, wow!”

—QUOTE FROM A TEACHER

Orange Shirt Day PD

As part of our education for reconciliation, educators participated to better understand the effects of residential schools and the ongoing effects of forced assimilation. Resources were shared to help teachers prepare for Orange Shirt Day in their schools and classrooms.

Secret Path Week PD

Administrators and educators learned about Secret Path Week and the resources that are available to support them in their school and classrooms, to teach the content appropriately for different age groups.

Treaties Recognition Week PD

Treaties Recognition Week focuses on the importance of treaties, to help everyone to better understand the history. In this PD we looked at Treaties, and what they mean from varying perspectives of Indigenous Peoples.

New Nelson Resource roll out and PD

In the initial session, a tour of resources and online tools available for Grade 7 and 8 history teachers was provided. In the following 2 sessions, teachers deepened their understanding of the Grade 7 and 8 history curriculum and Indigenous perspectives, connecting to and reaching beyond the textbooks.

Water Resource Pilot Project PD K-2 & 3-8

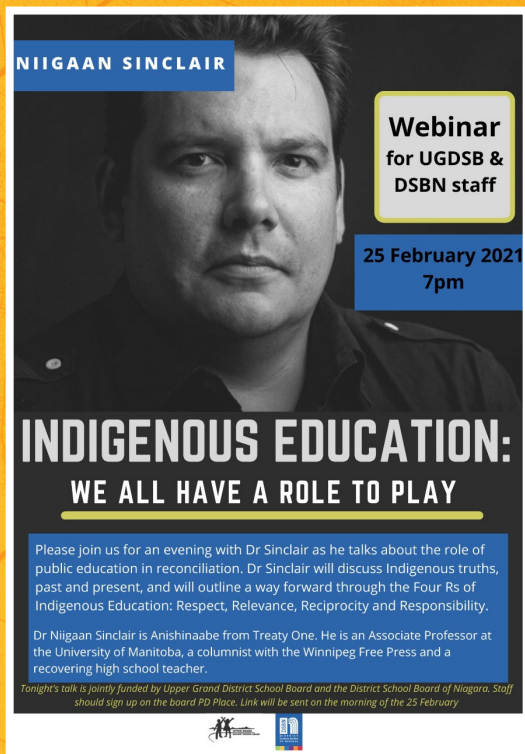
This PD was delivered for those educators who wanted to pilot the new resource in their literacy program. Lessons, resources, slide deck, ideas and cross-curricular/Four Frames connections were shared at this session. The pilot educators provided the team with valuable feedback through surveys, photos, questions and more. Attendees in the K-2 session received a copy of “Nibi’s Water Song” and resources for their school, while those who participated in the 3-8 session received “The Water Walker” and resources for their school. See pages 4 & 5 for the full story with participant quotes, photos and more on this important pilot.



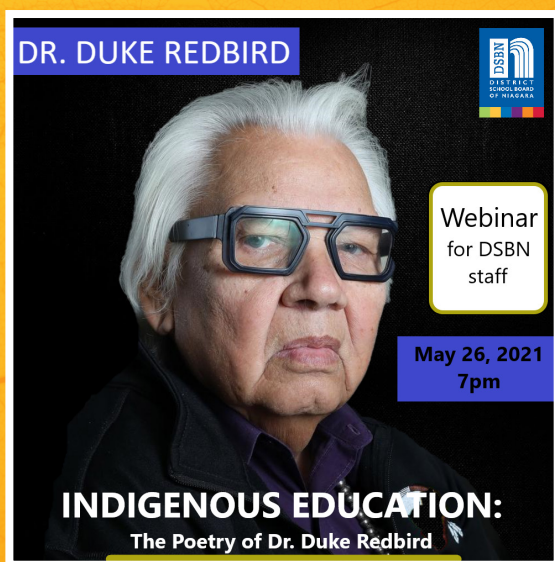
Every Child Matters

Facing History Course Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the Residential Schools PD

The secondary Indigenous Education team and SS Curriculum Consultant took part in this PD that provided strategies to help students think critically, discuss topics in appropriate ways, and connect history to their own lives. The next step will be to share these resources with educators in the secondary learning community.



Indigenous Education: We All Have a Role to Play Webinar Event Poster



Dr. Duke Redbird, Elder, poet, activist, educator, artist

ANTI-RACIST READS: Teachers, principals and vice principals participated in the Anti-Racist Reads podcast hosted by Colinda Clyne. DSNB provided the books Decolonizing Education by Marie Battiste, and Braiding Sweetgrass By Robin Wall Kimmer for all participants.

An additional 100 teachers will participate in Anti-Racist Educator Reads podcasts this summer, by reading and following along with the recordings. The option to read Unsettling Canada, by Arthur Manuel, was added.

DR. NIIGAAN SINCLAIR: Dr. Niigaan Sinclair spoke to 129 staff and community members about the role of public education in reconciliation. Dr Sinclair discussed Indigenous truths, past and present, and outlined a way forward through the Four Rs of Indigenous Education: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Responsibility. Thirty of the participants were enrolled in the Indigenous AQ Course.

THE POETRY OF DR. DUKE REDBIRD: At a special event in May, Dr. Redbird shared stories and experiences from his life, while reading selections of his poetry to highlight those moments. Copies of Duke's book "Poetry" were provided for all secondary schools as well as each of the 91. participants. The recording from the event will be used as a resource to support student learning.

"Thank you so much to all! So profound and a true privilege to hear you speak your truth."

-QUOTE FROM A PARTICIPANT

"I truly appreciate you sharing so much of your story with us tonight"

-QUOTE FROM A PARTICIPANT

INDIGENOUS DAYS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The Secondary Curriculum Team produced an Indigenous Days of Significance website, which includes information about Orange Shirt Day, Secret Path Week, Treaty Recognition Week, Inuit Day, Aboriginal Veterans Day and Louis Riel Day.

MOCCASIN TALK SPEAKER'S SERIES: June 15th marked the fourth and final session of the four-part speaker series with author, journalist and activist Tanya Talaga. This virtual event was free to all DSBN staff and community members.

Tanya Talaga is an acclaimed storyteller, and the first Ojibway woman to deliver the CBC Massey lectures. Her book *Seven Fallen Feathers*, an award-winning national bestseller, tells the important story of seven Indigenous high school students who died in Thunder Bay. In her powerful keynotes, Talaga shares Indigenous stories from across Canada and the world, humanizing the legacy of residential schools and colonization, sharing her hope for a more inclusive and equitable future.

NTIP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: New teachers employed in Ontario must complete a teacher induction program in their first year of teaching, called New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). As a part of their professional development, the DSBN felt it was important to provide professional development on Indigenous Education and teaching and supporting Indigenous youth. Sessions with new teachers occurred in the spring.

SECONDARY COURSE UPDATES: Work has begun on revising course material for Grade 9 Geography, CGCID, CGCIDF, CGCIP. Consultation will continue.

NBE CURATION PROJECT: The English and Indigenous Consultants along with seven Secondary teachers participated in the NBE Curation Project. Teachers started the process of collaborating around the resources for NBE, and will be continuing the consultation process in the fall.

MÉTIS EDUCATION KITS: 98 Métis Education Kits from the Métis Nation of Ontario were distributed to both elementary and secondary schools. Schools were also provided with a guide developed by our consultants to support educators and offered virtual PD to show how they could be implemented in the classroom.



Tanya Talaga, Moccasin Talk Speaker Series, June 15, 2021
Virtual Event Poster



Métis Education Kit & Curriculum Roll Out

JUNE 2021



DSBN Indigenous Education Update