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**BDDEC**  
**INDIGENIZING**  
**EDUCATION**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**VOLUME**  
**1**

**"NAN KAK"**  
**"NUNA"**  
**"LAND"**

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"It doesn't take one day or one trip on the land to learn everything about it, but the knowledge is accumulated down through the years."

John Tetso (Dene Kede p. 132)

Both the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit in the Beaufort Delta have long relied on their ancestral teachings from the land to provide for their needs. Transitioning to the 21st century, the land and cultural teachings remain steadfast for both groups.

BDDEC has been a part of the teaching platform of culture based education since the early 1990s. We have seen an evolution in culture based programming and are on the cusp of exciting and momentous work. Today our students are part of the movement towards Indigenizing Education. Our communities are at the forefront of this work and their knowledge is crucial to the continued success of students in today's world.

This newsletter represents the ways in which teaching and learning in our district is connected and infused with the powerful and rich knowledge of our Elders, traditional teachings, and vibrant communities.

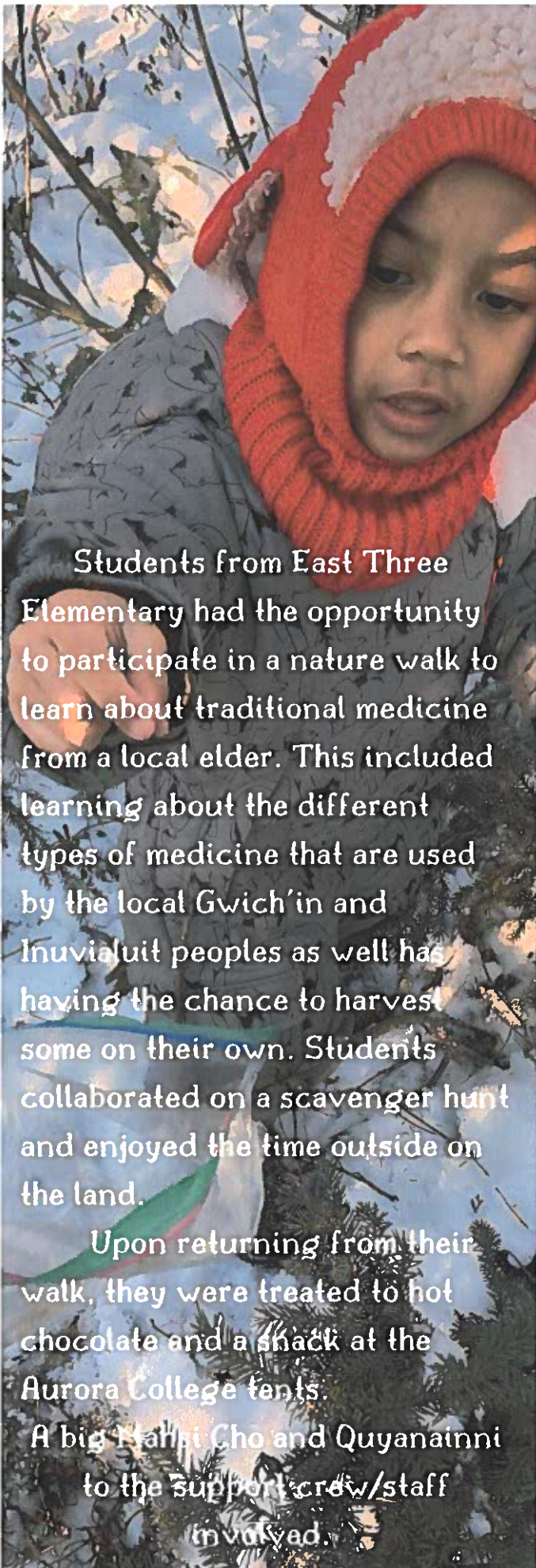
Mahsi Quana Quyanaq Quyanainni

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**VELMA ILLASIAK**

(REGIONAL INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE EDUCATION CONSULTANT)





Students from East Three Elementary had the opportunity to participate in a nature walk to learn about traditional medicine from a local elder. This included learning about the different types of medicine that are used by the local Gwich'in and Inuvialuit peoples as well as having the chance to harvest some on their own. Students collaborated on a scavenger hunt and enjoyed the time outside on the land.

Upon returning from their walk, they were treated to hot chocolate and a snack at the Aurora College tents.

A big Mahpi Cho and Quyanainni to the support crew/staff involved.





# CPNS! HARVESTING

Connecting Elders and students, Chief Paul Niditchie School in Tsiigehtchic combined technology and tradition for engaging cultural learning experiences. Ms Renie and Ms Shelane created Gwich'in language games using the app Bitsboard to facilitate vocabulary enriched hands-on learning at camp and around the school. Grace Blake led a learning circle in the camp cabin where students learned about respect, stewardship and uses for the plants in the local environment: "When taking from a plant to be used for medicine, we must pay a token of gratitude in return. Something of value that could be left is tobacco, a match stick or some tea. The greater the belief in the power of the plant, the greater affect it will have" (Grace Blake).

Photo Left to Right:  
Grace Blake, Cruz Blake & Jase Blake  
Learning circle at school camp  
Tsiigehtchic, NT 2019

## Stations

Students explored five learning stations guided by Elders and teachers:

- harvesting lidii másgit (labrador tea) and dzé kwan with Ms Jenny and Ms Jamie in the brush
- making bannock with Greta Villebrun in the gym
- making lidii detrée ják (juniper tea) with Ms Erica in the kitchen
- making medicine using dzé kwan (spruce gum) with Ms Renie and Grace Blake in the cabin
- making lidii másgit with Ms Gayle at camp

## Classroom

Students of CPNS demonstrated their learning through expository writing, developing their reporting skills for the District Wide Write in the Spring.

Kindergarten: taught their families in the play kitchen how to prepare lidii másgit, following the methods in their recipe book created during shared writing- Ms Shelane

Grades 1-2: did a collaborative art project accompanied by written reports on the event- Ms Colleen

Grades 3-6: used technology to create eye-catching reports with photos from the event and online- Mr G

Grades 7-9: dug a little deeper and added their own research of the benefits of local plants- Mr Nick

Written by Shelane Stuart



# Berry Picking



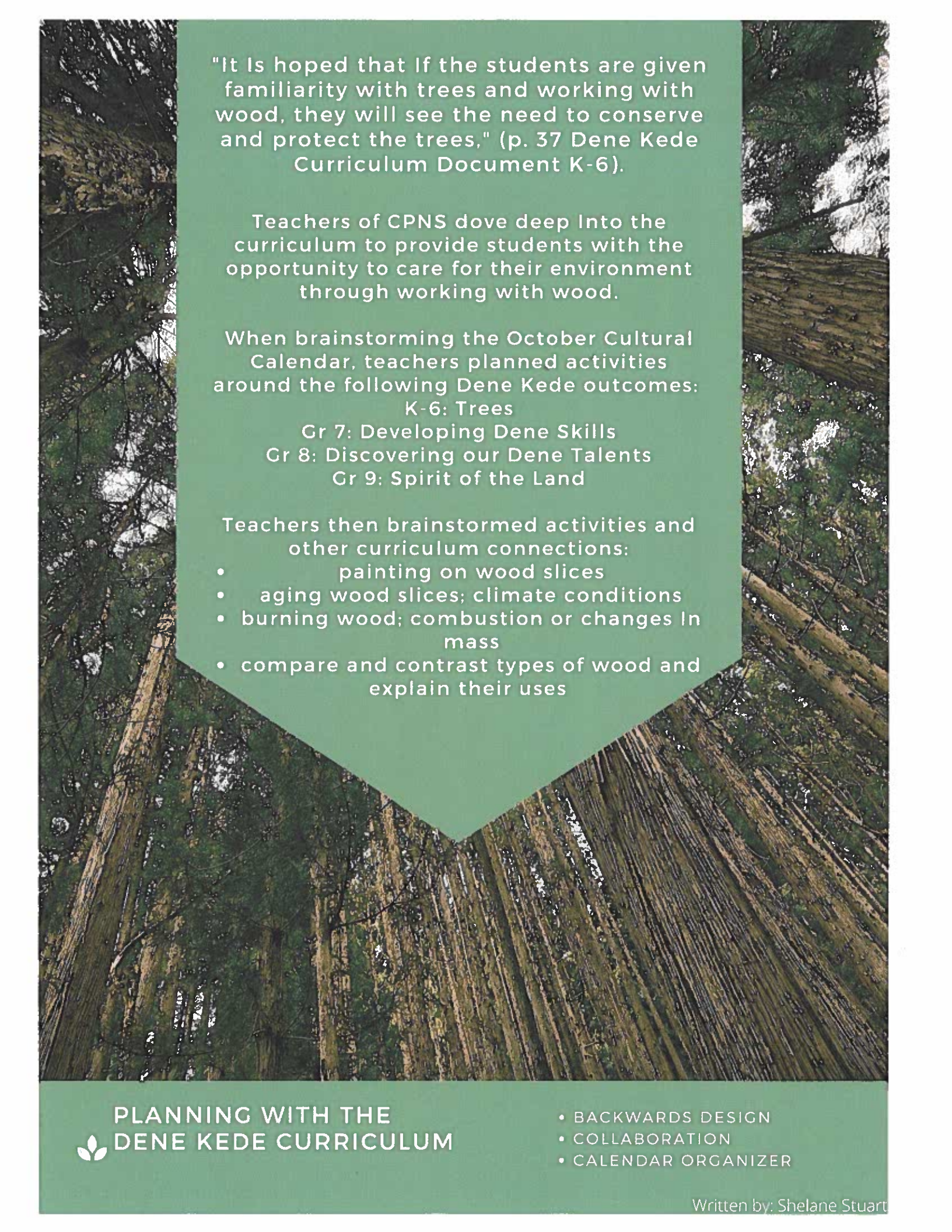
In Tetl'it Zheh (Fort McPherson), as the school season starts up, the berry picking season is beginning to wind down. By this time, many community members have spent a part of the summer picking the plethora of edible berries found on their land. They are able to identify local areas where students can find different types of berries to pick. A place not far from the school, Nataiinlaii (Eight Miles), was just the right spot.

As Ernest Vittrekwa led the way, the grade ones followed him on the trail he grew up taking, to learn about the many berries and plants. The students quickly discovered natl'at (cranberries) growing in abundance in low-lying bushes. As the students counted, collected, and ate their berries, they learned that the berries can be used for dye, food, or for medicine. The plants and berries can be made into lidii (tea), to treat kidney or urinary tract problems. The children also discovered dineech'uh (blackberry). They only ended up with a small collection however, as they were too eager to eat them! Dineech'uh can be mixed with natl'at and added to it'suh. It'suh is a Gwich'in dessert made from pounded dryfish. Dineech'uh are easily confused with ts'iivii ch'ok (crowberry), which are not edible, but can be used for medicine. At this time of the year, the students did find some jak zheii (blueberries), but they were too soft to pick and collect so the few that were found ended up in their mouths and not in their buckets.

Upon returning to their classroom, the students were able to connect their berry picking experience to many curricular expectations. We counted and sorted their berries into baggies to take home to their families. With the remaining berries, the students worked together and applied many math concepts, such as measurement, fractions, and counting, while they used their cranberries in the kitchen to create delicious and healthy baked goods!







"It is hoped that if the students are given familiarity with trees and working with wood, they will see the need to conserve and protect the trees," (p. 37 Dene Kede Curriculum Document K-6).

Teachers of CPNS dove deep into the curriculum to provide students with the opportunity to care for their environment through working with wood.

When brainstorming the October Cultural Calendar, teachers planned activities around the following Dene Kede outcomes:

K-6: Trees

Gr 7: Developing Dene Skills

Gr 8: Discovering our Dene Talents

Gr 9: Spirit of the Land

Teachers then brainstormed activities and other curriculum connections:

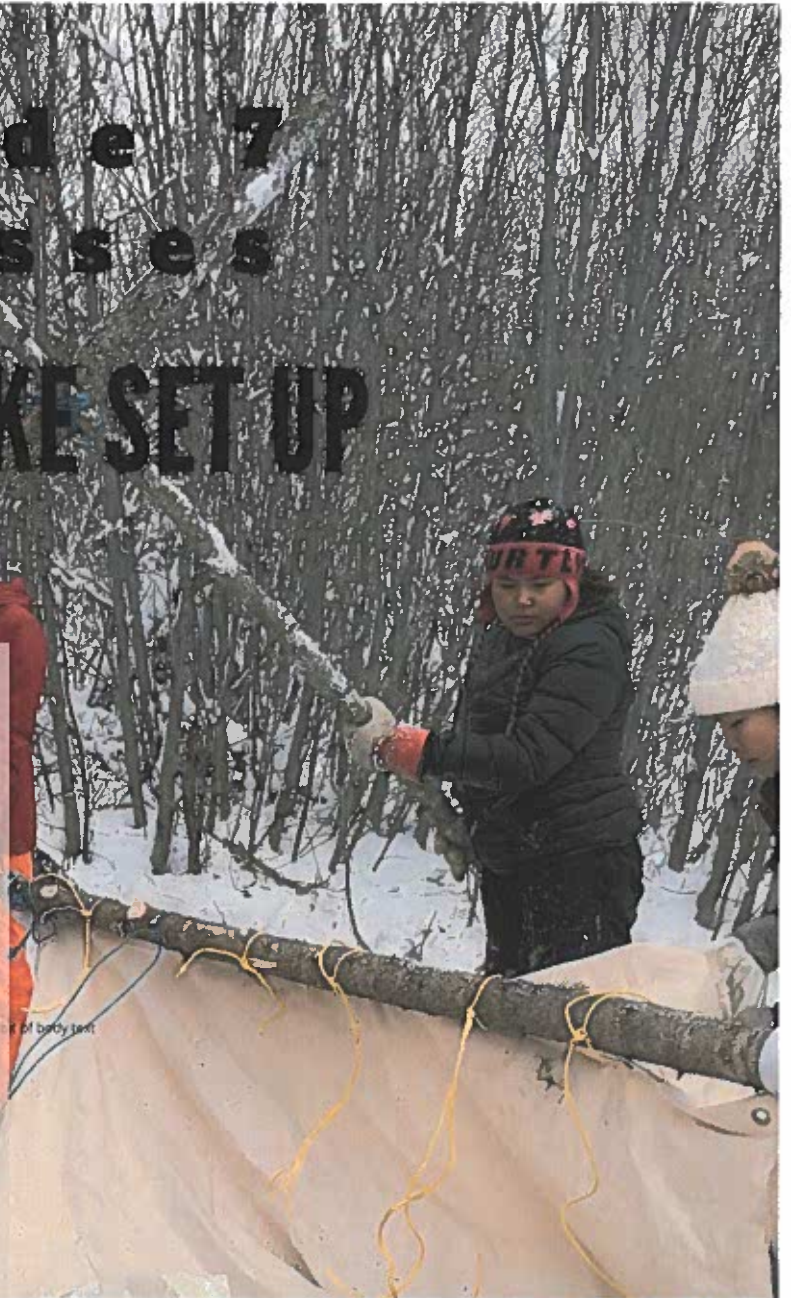
- painting on wood slices
- aging wood slices; climate conditions
- burning wood; combustion or changes in mass
- compare and contrast types of wood and explain their uses



# **Grade 7 Classes BOOT LAKE SET UP**

**The two grade 7 classes from East Three Secondary traveled to Boot Lake to set up for the Elementary Program. During their day trip to Boot Lake, students were taught how to traditionally set a canvas tent, facilitated by local Gwich'in ENR officer Ernie Francis.**

**Additionally, students conducted math lessons on integers using materials from the land as well as science activities. Students also learned about traditional medicine from Elder Bella Kay. East Three would like to thank Ernie and Bella for assisting with the program.**





A group of children in winter gear are gathered around a large fish, likely a salmon, which is resting on a wooden board. They are looking at the fish with interest. The background shows other children and a snowy environment.

# East Three Elementary Boot Lake Fish Camp

The 2019 Boot Lake Program targeted all students at the Elementary level. Each class spent time learning about the fish that were caught, their local names, body parts, and typical uses. They were shown how to cut up and cook by traditional means.

This year there was also a focus placed upon the Grade 6 classes in efforts to draw extensions into their math and science curriculum. Each grade 6 class spent a full day down at Boot Lake where students participated in pulling the net twice a day. They spent a significant amount of time in the tent learning from our Indigenous Language Instructors. Students practiced language in action with Inuvialuktun and Gwich'in instructors (Donna Johns, Dwayne Drescher, and Annie Smith) who provided a hands on collaborative approach.

Students were given time with local resource personnel (IRC fish monitors and an educational outreach facilitator with Aurora Research Institute) to work on their Boot Lake Science project connected to the "Diversity of living things unit". Having the opportunity to interview workers in this field of study made their learning authentic and relevant.

One of the highlights of this trip was that students were able to participate in the harvesting and cooking of an important traditional food source.

A large fire is burning brightly in a pit, with flames reaching up. The fire is the central focus of the image, and it appears to be cooking something over it. The background is dark, and the fire is the main source of light.

They really got to appreciate where their food comes from.

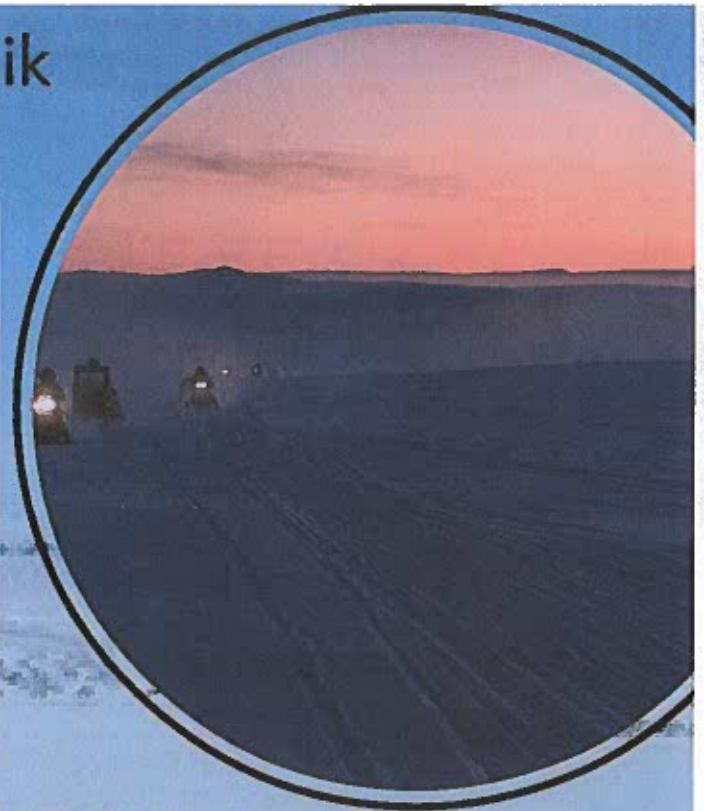




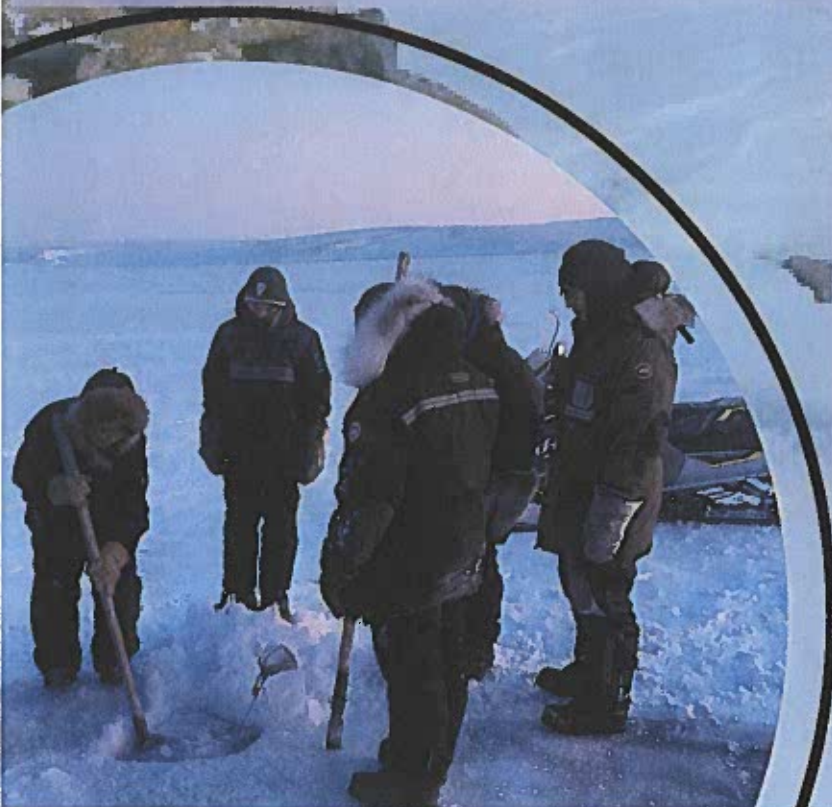
# Helen Kalvak Elihakvik

## 2019

On November 4, 2019 a group of students in grades 8-10 traveled by skidoo to spend 4 nights in cabins near Aimaugatahok (Fish Lake) in Ulukhaktok. Aimaugatahok is an important harvesting area of the Ulukhaktokmiut, as there is a short river nearby for the fish to migrate into the sea. HKS students annually carry on the traditional harvesting of fish at this site.



Students set kuvyak (nets) under the ice and checked them over the span of the trip catching a variety of fair sized fish. Language learning and Ayaraaq (string games) provided entertainment in the night time for students and community members alike. The students and guides visited multiple sites and found select species such as: anaakhiq (whitefish) and iqalukpik (Char). They harvested about 30 fish. Students gave away the fish to Elders upon their return. The Fish Lake monitor came to interpret the data from the harvest and take statistics of species and size.



Students were accompanied by local guides and Elders including: John Alikamik, Roland Notania, Danny Taptuna, Tyson Klenenberg, Winnie Akiatak, David Kuptana and Kelly Nigiyok. This trip was a great opportunity to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge of the Ulukhaktokmiut into school programming.



## CJS & ETSS Vàdzaih Hunt, 2019

# ROCK RIVER, YUKON

Students from East Three Secondary and Chief Julius School joined forces to participate on a six day trip to Rock River, Yukon in search of vàdzaih (caribou). Rock River is a traditional hunting area for the Gwich'in people. The Porcupine Caribou herd often use this area for their wintering grounds before heading to Alaska in the spring to calf their young. The nan kak (land) is rich in nutrients for wintering caribou and allow them to fatten up during the long and cold winter months.

Throughout the program students were taught how to set and maintain a winter camp. Included in this were lessons on how to find the proper trao (wood), set thao'ah (spruce boughs) for the dazheu niivayaa (winter tents), and make water out of (tsaih zhyaa) sugar snow, among many others. One of the highlights was listening to the Gwich'in language and stories from Anjòo (Elder) Mary Effie Snowshoe on the history of the area and how it was traditionally used by the Gwich'in people. Coming back to this area with students was a major source of joy for Mary who stated that she "can still hear the laughter of her peoples echoing through the hills".

Although we were stranded for three days in Rock River due to high winds, it did provide a major source of learning for the students. During this time, students were taught how to read the weather by traditional means and were given instruction on how to make safety calls. Our Elder staff also explained what to do if you were caught in a blizzard while travelling on the land. In the end, our group was successful on harvesting neekaii vàdzaih (two caribou). Students fully participated in the process of gutting and preparing the vàdzaih, with instruction from our Anjòo kat (Elders) on site. The vàdzaih were graciously given to the Inuvik students to bring back to their community.

A big Mahsi Cho to the resource crew from Teetl'it Zheh for sharing their wealth of knowledge on this program.



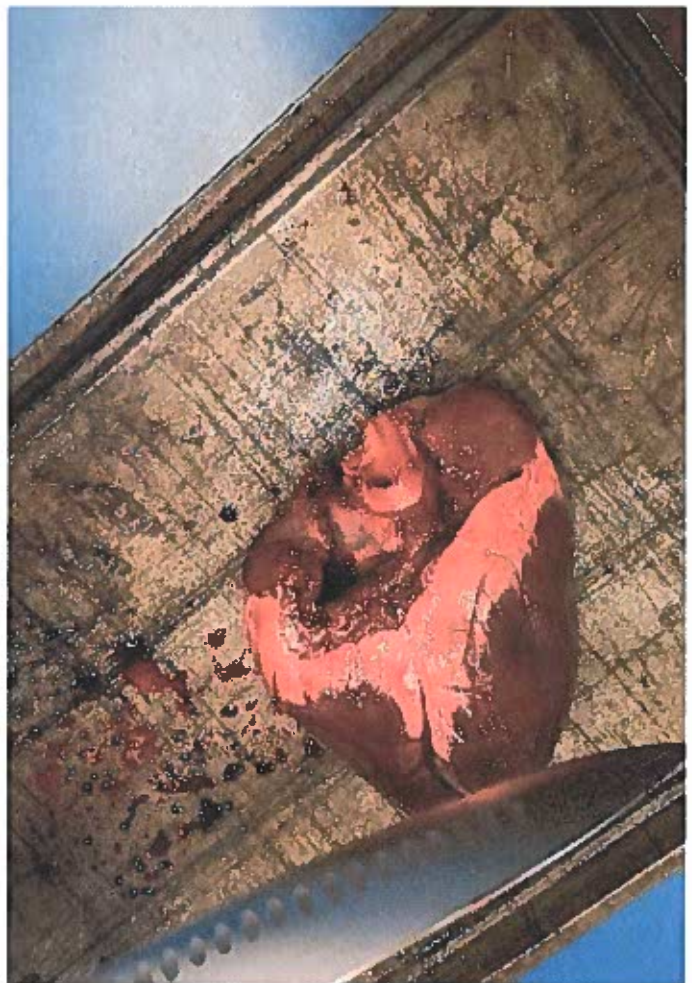


# Comparing body systems at MHS

Students at Moose Kerr School got a first hand view of how the circulatory system in a vadzaiih/ tuttu (caribou) works. The grade 4/5 class and their teacher investigated the differences between our human bodies and that of an important local food source. Vadzaih (in Gwich'in) and Tuttu (in Inuvialuktun) are a commonly hunted animal for the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit.

Lamia Obeid wanted her students to think critically about the information they were learning about the systems of the body in their Science class and so she reached out to the community of Aklavik. A parent donated a vadzaih iidrii or tuttu uuman (caribou heart) that she could use in her classroom to show the students how a heart pumps blood and its main parts. The iidrii/ uuman is a tasty delicacy which made the lesson even more special.

Students were able to make many connections between the human body and the caribou they studied--connecting their learning to an important cultural resource of the community.





FIRST ANNUAL MANGILALUK  
SCHOOL FASHION SHOW  
2019  
"THIS IS WHO WE ARE"

ON DECEMBER 13, 2019 MANGILALUK SCHOOL HOSTED ITS FIRST ANNUAL INDIGENOUS FASHION SHOW TO CELEBRATE THE WORK OF THE FASHIONS 15 CIS COURSE. SCHOOL STAFF CAME TOGETHER TO PLAN CROSS CURRICULAR PROJECTS CELEBRATING THE ARTISTRY AND FUNCTIONALITY OF NORTHERN CLOTHING. CLASSES FROM JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN TO HIGH SCHOOL LOOKED AT FASHION AND CLOTHING FROM A VARIETY OF LENSES STUDYING THE INTRICATE PATTERNS OF THE DELTA BRAID TO THE USES AND QUALITIES OF VARIOUS TYPES OF FUR FOR WARMTH AND STYLE. THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF HISTORY AND CLOTHING AS WELL AS THE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY WERE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INQUIRY PROJECTS THAT ACCOMPANIED THE SHOW.

THE TUKTOYUKTUK DRUMMERS AND DANCERS OPENED THE SHOW WITH A STUNNING PERFORMANCE FEATURING THEIR YOUNGEST MEMBERS. STUDENTS AND STAFF STRUTTED THEIR STUFF ON THE RUNWAY FEATURING INTRICATELY SEWN KAUGAQ (FANCY SHOES) FOR WOMEN AND SIVURALIK (FANCY BOOTS) FOR MEN. THERE WERE DONATED ATIGI (PARKAS) FROM ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT AS WELL AS A VARIETY OF COLOREUL AND UNIQUE ATIKLUK (PARK COVERS) ON DISPLAY. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED A FULL LENGTH NATCHIQ ATIGI (SEALSKIN PARKA) WITH SEWN DESIGNS AND A NUMBER OF AMARUQ (SUNBURST FUR RUFFS). ALL OF THE ANNURAAT (CLOTHING) IN THE SHOWCAME FROM THE BEAUFORT AND DELTA REGIONS OF THE NWT.



THE EFFORT INVOLVED IN RUNNING A SHOW SUCH AS THIS CAN SEEM MONUMENTAL HOWEVER, THE STAFF AND STUDENTS AT MANGILALUK REALLY CAME TOGETHER TO SHARE THEIR PRIDE IN THE HISTORY AND RESILIENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF TUKTUYAATUUQ AND THE BEAUTY AND INGENUITY OF INDIGENOUS FASHION IN THEIR LIVES.





# ULU PROJECT



In an effort to integrate an important cultural activity into their ELA class, junior high students at **Angik School** in Paulatuk worked with a local elder to create ulus and then wrote short essays about their importance and the steps to produce one.

The creation of the ulus included time with a local Elder and the stories surrounding the uses and importance of the ulu in Inuvialuit culture. Students worked to cut, shape and shine the blades as well as secure their handles. At each step the students were given time to appreciate the artifice involved in the process. Upon completion of the ulus the class looked at the structure of procedural writing in order to create essays on their experiences. This was a great project that showcases the blending of culture and academics in the school.

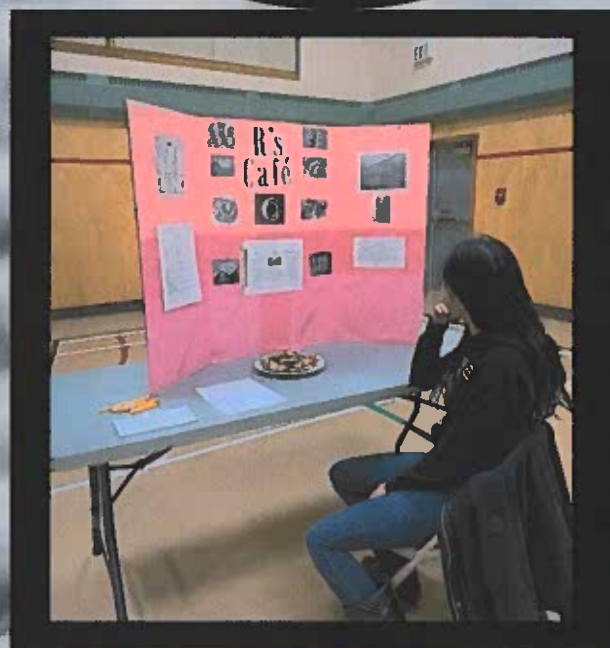


# Mangilaluk School Trade Show

At the 2019 Mangilaluk Trade Show, Calm 20 students presented their created businesses that included the following: A spa, two coffee shops, a bakery, a canoe/kayak rental store, a paintball business, a vet office and an animal shelter in one, an art gallery with a tattoo parlour, a clothing emporium, as well as a snowmobile mechanic shop. The class also saw the creation of a meat shop, a hunting shop, another bakery and a bar and grill.

Students followed all of the steps from the business pitch to the trade show and were able to draw connections to the other modules in CALM 20 (Careers, Budgeting and Health).

The event was well attended by all students in the school and students were engaged in chatting with the business "owners". It was the best turnout and the best engagement of any trade show from previous years. Some members of the public came and the students were very excited to show off their business ideas. Look out for these future entrepreneurs!





# BDDEC Communities



## Practice the Language with us!

English	Gwich'in Inuvik Fort McPherson Tsiigehtchic Akavik	Inuvialuktun Uummarmiutun dialect Inuvik Akavik	Inuvialuktun Siglitun dialect Tuktoyaktuk Sachs Harbour Paulatuk	Inuinnaqtun Kangiryuarmiutun dialect Ulukhaktok
How are you?	Danch'uu? or Neenjit dōonch'yaa?	Qanuqitpit?	Qanuqitpit?	Qanuipit / Qunuripin?
I'm fine.	Sheenjit gwinzji.	Nakuufunga	Nakuuyunga	Nammaktunga
Good Morning.	Vahn gwiinzii	Uvlaamii	Ublaak asii	Ublami / Ublankut
Thank you.	Mahsi / Haj' cho	Quyanaq	Quyanainni	Quana
See you later.	Chan nanh nahnilah	Aatnugunlu	Anakanluu	Ublumilu / Uviatiagul
Good Afternoon	Drin gwiinzii	Uvlumii	Ubluk asii	Ublukut
What are you doing?	Danidi'it?	Huligivit?	Sumavit?	Hulivin / Hulivit?

