



VOICES OF THE NORTH

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PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS AND EDUCATION STAFF

This month our District Student Wellness Coordinator, Samson Tshuma got the opportunity to connect with the Director of the Student Support and Wellness (SSW) division at the department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Gillian Dawe-Taylor, to learn more about how the division is prioritizing the mental health and wellbeing of students and education staff.

WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO SAY: THANK YOU!

A huge mahsi quyanainni quana to all the BDDEC Staff that supported the many initiatives in response to COVID 19 in the Beaufort Delta region. The Staff throughout the district delivered groceries to families. A big thank you to the Inuvik Food Bank for their generous contributions. A big mahsi cho to Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) who supported this initiative and for their continued support of our communities. A big quyanainni to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) for their continued support of our communities. Members of various District Education Authorities in the Beaufort Delta have supported our communities in various leaderships during the pandemic. We are very appreciative their continued leadership, communication and support



Dear Friends,

I hope that you will enjoy our Newsletter.

First, I would like to express my gratitude to all our UNW and NWTTA employees.

Over the past two years they have carried our schools and helped us move forward despite the pandemic. They demonstrated a lot of dedication, and they have done their very best to keep our kids motivated, in very difficult circumstances.

I usually do not celebrate individuals because so many of our employees are doing good things, but I will make an exception to highlight the continuous efforts of principal Griffin at Deh Gah school.

Principal Griffin, has gone beyond the call of duty many times, because she sees Education as more than academics. For her, Education (and leadership) is also about taking care of everybody.

She recently managed to secure \$ 86,000 and was able to distribute food voucher of \$ 250 to each household in her community. Last year, she managed to get a big truck load of salmon for all the families. This dedicated principal has a very strong sense of duty and community, and always tries to care for everybody.

Good job Angela, your efforts are not going unnoticed.

Superintendent Brulot



CELEBRATING KAKISA STUDENTS:

Kindness is much more than words or even deeds. Kindness is an inner quality that needs to be cultivated. The students of Kakisa Lake are practicing kindness by bringing in wood for one of our Elders who is not well. They also take food, from their cooking program, to the Elders, on a regular basis

KINDERGARTEN AT LKES LEARNS ABOUT LUNAR NEW YEAR



LEARNING IS FUN AT ECHO DENE SCHOOL



SUPERINTENDENT

P. Brulot

CONTRIBUTORS

Angela Griffin

Julia Erasmus

Will Magno

Benjamin Adams

Sylvester Boadi

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Charles Tetcho School

Charles Yohin School

Chief Julian Yendo School

Deh Gáh School

Echo Dene School

Kakisa Lake School

Łíídlıı Kúé Elementary

School

Łíídlıı Kúé Regional High

School

Louie Norwegian School

Moose Kerr School



ROCKS AND THEIR PROPERTIES

The students in Ms. Paula's class learned Rocks and Their Properties.

There are three main types of rocks: sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic. Each of these rocks are formed by physical changes. They understood that the rock cycle is a continuous pattern of change and explained what happens over and over again to the rocks in our earth.



Benjamin Kennedy

PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS AND EDUCATION STAFF

This month our District Student Wellness Coordinator, Samson Tshuma got the opportunity to connect with the Director of the Student Support and Wellness (SSW) division at the department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Gillian Dawe-Taylor, to learn more about how the division is prioritizing the mental health and wellbeing of students and education staff.

The Student Support & Wellness Division

The Student Support & Wellness division is one of six divisions within the education branch of ECE. ECE provides support to JK-12 schools in a variety of ways, including student support; which includes inclusive schooling and safe schools training, referral-based solution finding for School-based Support Teams (SBSTs), and career and education advising for Gr. 9-12 students.

The leadership of the division includes a director (Gillian Dawe-Taylor), an assistant director (Monique Hurley) and a Career and Education Advising (CEA) program manager (Simone Goudreau).

The Department focuses on providing systemic supports to ensure there is equitable service across the NWT. Their mandate is clear, to effectively provide needed supports to our students, education bodies and ECE staff and work in tandem to find efficient ways to continuously progress and provide guidance and services for schools in the NWT.

The Significance of Mental Health

One cannot forget the legacy of colonialism and the residential school system and its impacts upon Indigenous people. Trauma informed practices are critical in school as an act



of reconciliation and a way to continue healing the rift between education and families. Continuing to change traditional western practices to align with and/or incorporate Indigenous worldviews is necessary. With that said, mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how people act, feel, and think. It impacts how we relate to one another, make choices and handle stress. If our mental health is poor, our ability to learn will be less than optimal.

To help prepare students to become their most capable selves and preparing students for a successful place in the adult world a series of student needs must be met – mental health is one of those needs.

The Role Teachers Play

Teachers can have a large impact on student mental wellness by learning about regulation (self-regulation and co-regulation) and teaching their students healthy strategies to deal with stress. By teaching and promoting social and emotional competence and resilience building education staff can focus on building healthy lifelong habits and behaviours. Teachers can also refer students to mental health supports when needed, ensuring a safe and positive school environment, and explicitly teaching healthy behaviours and decision making through an evidence-informed program.

Education staff need to be well themselves and have healthy coping strategies so that they are able to best handle the multiple competing demands that occur in a school classroom. In this way they can serve as positive mental health role models for their students. This can be challenging and educators do not have to go it alone. Building mental health strategies into the daily classroom routine will only benefit both students and educators, so a focus on this as part of your teaching or your school improvement planning processes would be ideal.

Collaborative Initiatives

ECE, the department of Health and Social Services (HSS), 10 education authorities and 3 health authorities collaborate to implement a Child and Youth Care Counselling initiative that places 42 counsellors and a traveling itinerant mental health team in schools. As the initiative will be fully rolled out as of the end of this school year, planning for an evaluation underway to assess the school counselling

services of the Child and Youth Care Counselling initiative. This will give the stakeholder important information to make ongoing adjustments towards continual improvement. "We are also keenly aware of the impacts of the pandemic and will be doing our best to support our schools in continuing to navigate this ongoing situation," says Dawe-Taylor.

Available Resources

Mental health and wellbeing trainings are available by ECE and HSS such as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), Trauma-Informed Practice in Schools, and Talking about Mental Illness (TAMI) awareness program.

Furthermore, as mandated in the Safe School Regulations, all NWT schools must implement evidence-based healthy relationship programming. ECE supports schools to implement this programming by offering training in the Fall and Winter/Spring on the following evidence-based program trainings, if and as needed: 4th R, HRPP Enhanced and HRP for LGBT2SQ+ Youth. Training for WITS (JK-3) and LEADS (4-6) is accessible online. WITS (JK-3) and LEADS (4-6) are evidence-based programs which help JK-6 students deal with victimization and bullying and learn healthy relationship skills. Some schools use other programs and, as long as they are evidence informed and work towards building healthy relationships for our students, that is just fine.

Programs and resources available to staff including Starling Minds, Employee and Family Assistance Program, workplace wellness tools, eMental health resources, the Community Counselling Program and more.

The Importance of an Evidence-Based Mental Health Approach in Schools

ECE collects data about student mental health from questions on assessments delivered in the school system including Early-years Development Instrument, Middle-years Development Instrument, and the Health Behaviours of School-Aged Children assessment. This data can be used to see how our students report that they are doing in key areas of mental wellness. Once interventions have been applied, we can also see how we are doing in improving the mental health of students.

WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO SAY: THANK YOU!

A huge mahsi quyanainni quana to all the BDDEC Staff that supported the many initiatives in response to COVID 19 in the Beaufort Delta region. Across the district we have experienced various COVID 19 related school shutdowns. The Staff throughout the district delivered groceries to families. A big thank you to the Inuvik Food Bank for their generous contributions. A big mahsi cho to Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) who supported this initiative and for their continued support of our communities. A big quyanainni to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) for their continued support of our communities. Members of various District Education Authorities in the Beaufort Delta have supported our communities in various leaderships during the pandemic. We are very appreciative of their continued leadership, communication and support.

In November staff also helped staff an isolation center in the community of Tuktoyaktuk. The staff this week worked in the isolation center comforting those ill with COVID 19. We are very appreciative of the staff volunteering for temporary redeployment. Staff also supported COVID 19 screening throughout the pandemic. We are appreciative of the continued efforts of the BDDEC staff that ensured our schools are as safe as possible. I want to thank the administrative teams / support staff of our schools who have put in many extra hours communicating with families and staff. The sense of community and support for one another has been incredibly heart warming despite the trying times we've experienced with the COVID 19 pandemic. Our students have been shown a tremendous example of resiliency and caring across the district.



CROSS CURRICULAR PLANNING AND TEAM TEACHING ON THE LAND

Throughout the fall and winter of this year, the Grade 7 teaching team at East Three Secondary School (E3SS) has been collaborating to plan place based teaching around curricular concepts. In the fall, grade 7 teachers Abe Drennan, Courtney Laroque and Jacintha Laroque worked with the On the Land Coordinator Justin Cormier to plan a three day experience at Boot Lake in Inuvik. Boot Lake camp is located on the banks of the East Channel of the Mackenzie Delta and is the site of the annual fish camp program for both East Three Elementary and East Three Secondary School. Grade 7s were a target group in this program this year as a way to connect to the Dene Kede module of setting up and participating in a fish camp connected to the traditional ways of doing.

Students in all three grade 7 classes worked together with community Elders, Resource people and their school teaching team to establish the camp facility and embedded core curricular learning in Math, Socials, and English Language Arts in each step of the process. Inuvialuit and Gwich'in speakers from the community of Inuvik joined teachers on the land, facilitated language lessons, and provided words and phrases for students to use with each other as they learned traditional skills. Students set fish nets under the ice and learned traditional knowledge about harvesting and preparing fish while integrating scientific concepts about ecosystems and adaptations. Socials concepts around life and economies in the Circumpolar North were included in the learning as well. During the days on the land, students

learned important survival skills and were able to apply their learning in small group survival challenges where they had to build a shelter, make fire and boil water. This challenge helped students communicate, share skills, and build resiliency with guidance from Elder experts, members of ENR and the teacher team at E3SS.

The students and teachers found this program very engaging and decided to work collaboratively in the same fashion for their snaring excursion in the winter. This program centered around teaching the math unit of circle geometry and embedding content and skills from an ELA study of the text Two Old Women. Students have worked with ENR and Mr. Cormier to learn about a variety of snaring skills and forms of snares, set a snare line and are learning to work with the animals they harvest while connecting this traditional knowledge to the concepts they are learning in math such as radius and circumference. They are able to practice these skills in an experiential way that highlights they ways that math lives in their environment and the cultural traditional knowledge they are learning in and outside of the school.

The power of the collaboration between teachers, students, and the support positions in the school and BDDEC during this school year is helping this cohort of students deeply engage in learning that is culturally relevant and engaging. This form of integrated, cross curricular learning is also a valuable approach in navigating the learning challenges that are resulting from school closures in the district due to Covid 19.



Math and manipulatives



Snare formulas



Traps



Land and tent



Fireside journals



ENR Talk



Table



Various snare sizes

NEWS FROM THE FORT SIMPSON DISTRICT EDUCATION AUTHORITY

The new members of the Fort Simpson District Education Authority (FSDEA) were sworn in on November 9, 2021. Thanks to all who put their name forward to run during the local municipal election. All members were all acclaimed and include:

- Muaz Hassan, Chair
- Julia Erasmus, Vice Chair
- Troy Bellefontaine, Village of Fort Simpson representative
- Travis Hanna
- Raymond Michaud
- Renalyn Pascua-Matte (FSDEA's DDEC representative)
- Brendan Whelly

Liidlil Kue First Nation (LKFN) representative yet to be selected

These members have a vested interest in the education system and want to support the improvement of the educational experiences our children have in both the Liidlil Kue Elementary School and Liidlil Kue Regional High School. If you are a member of LKFN and are interested in sitting on the FSDEA for a 3-year term, please bring your name forward to Chief Kele Antoine.

I was granted a FSDEA seat during the last term when a vacant seat became available and no one came forward.

My educational background includes a diploma in Urban and Regional Planning, a degree in Fine Arts (Ceramics) and a diploma in Dental Therapy. Other members have training in the trades, business, and finance; five members have attended school in Fort Simpson; and we all love our community and are passionate about education!

The FSDEA is in the planning stages to design an outdoor learning space (a gazebo-type structure) on the school grounds. Guy Architects is the firm that was selected to design this structure. It is the hope of the FSDEA to provide

a space that is easily accessible for cultural and outdoor learning because Indigenizing education is a priority within our schools. Once a design is selected the FSDEA will raise the necessary funds to build it. Stay tuned, the design will be shared in a future Voices of the North publication.

If you have any commendations or concerns, please bring them in writing to the Chair Hassan or me and we will discuss during our next scheduled meeting.

Mahsi,
Julia Erasmus
Acting Chair

ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM NEWS

The Dental Hygienist, Wendy Wardlaw, and I travelled around the Dehcho to provide classroom presentations and services. We drove to Jean Marie River in September for a day and were able to see 10 children (90%). In October, we drove to Fort Liard for a week and saw 53 students (52%, many students are reported to be irregular attenders). Our last 2021 community visit was in December, we flew to Sombaa K'e for a daytrip and saw 10 children (77%). While we were in Sombaa K'e, we were able to provide Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) treatment to the children whose parents provided SDF consent for their child.

Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) is a way to deal with your child's tooth

cavities. SDF is painted on decayed teeth and turns the yellow/brown spots black, which means the tooth decay is stopping. This treatment may need more than one application. SDF is a wonderful alternative to the risks associated with putting your child under general anesthetic to restore their teeth. I have used it on my own daughter because of her age and I refuse to take the risks associated with general anesthetic to restore her teeth.

During our visits, we made classroom presentations and provided dental screenings, fluoride varnish treatments, oral hygiene instruction, and referrals as needed for the students with consent to the Oral Health Program. This year's consent

form gives permission for your child to be enrolled in the Oral Health Program until graduation. If you have not received a consent form, please call your child/ren's school or contact me at julia_erasmus@gov.nt.ca to request the form.

In Fort Simpson, I made classroom presentations to all the elementary classes in the fall and will make additional presentations during Oral Health Month in April. Forty-seven children have been screened in the Liidlil Kue Elementary School and I will now focus on Junior Kindergarten for their screenings. I prefer to give this class time to mature and adjust to school before bringing them into the dental clinic.

Our program mandate is to visit each school a minimum of twice a year. Covid outbreaks in the Dehcho have delayed these plans, but we will continue to provide the best possible service as time allows and restrictions ease. Thank you for your patience and we look forward to meeting your children and youth in our region to provide services. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me anytime at (867) 695-3016 or Dental Hygienist Wendy Wardlaw at (867) 695-7049.

Mahsi,
Julia Erasmus,
Dental Therapist

THE DEHCHO CURRICULUM COMMITTEE IS WORKING HARD FOR OUR STUDENTS

For some time, the desire to create unique, culturally relevant, and engaging courses was a long-term plan in the Dehcho District Office but the timing wasn't quite right to devote the personnel and resources to the undertaking. In November 2021 a Curriculum Team was created at the Dehcho District Office and tasked with the challenge of developing a locally developed course unique to the North. Several key people were selected to be on the Team: Pauline Gilmour the Literacy Coordinator, Sharon Allen the district's RILE, Yvette Jean-Jacque the Principal in Fort Liard, JP Bernard the District IT Teacher Consultant,

and Jasna Finlay the Curriculum Coordinator.

The Team under the tutelage of our Superintendent worked tirelessly to create a unique course that is three traditional CTS COM courses combined into a framework that supports Dene Kede cultural awareness and language. This three-credit course provides students the opportunity to learn the art and science of visual composition, photography, and audio/video production while engaging in Dene cultural awareness and cultural appreciation activities. Students learn to employ fundamental elements of design for various media and gain a

strong foundational multidisciplinary experience. This unique course is titled *Naheghá Gondj Communications Introductory CTS Course*.

Students in Fort Liard and Fort Simpson are engaging in the learning opportunities this course provides this term. We are currently completing the recognition process to have this unique course registered as a locally developed course. We expect to be able to offer this course to other districts by the end of the school year. This course is one of many that will be designed this year and next to support high school students throughout the Dehcho and beyond.



Jasna Finlay



Yvette Jean-Jacques



Sharon Allen



Pauline Gilmour



JP Bernard

DGESS STUDENTS GO ON THE LAND IN LAST TWO WEEKS OF WINTER 2022 COVID SCHOOL CLOSURE

BY: ANGELA GRIFFIN

Niroja Thiru, Director of the Youth Centre in Fort Providence, took DGESS students on the land as they faced the final two weeks of Covid remote learning before returning to in-class learning on February 21st, 2022.

The camps were the brainchild of Niroja Thiru and Lois Philipp, former principal of Deh Gáh School and current owner and operator of Northern Loco, a local outfit that creates sustainable futures for Northern communities guided by Indigenous knowledge, traditional practices and holistic ways of being.

The Fort Providence Health Centre encouraged the trip and advised the facilitators of the camp as to proper Covid protocols to keep the children safe. The venture also had the blessing of the newly elected chief, Michael Vandell, and the Fort Providence band council. The Deh Gáh Got'ıę First Nation donated a bison tag.

The school principal, Angela Griffin, loaned the camps any equipment that included ski doo helmets, ski equipment, cooking utensils, and food to be

purchased on account at M and R Market. The school also provided the outing with the school satellite phone.

Each week-long camp was held in February between February 7th and February 18th. The camp from February 7th to February 11th was open to youth in Grades 6-8 and the camp from February 14th to February 18th was open to youth in Grades 9-12.

While at Horn River, DGESS students enjoyed participating in traditional activities like setting nets beneath the ice to fish, setting traps for hare, and hunting bison. The students ski dooed to and from the camps. The students and chaperones stayed overnight in the cabins, and enjoyed traditional meals of bannock and bison stew while staying together on the land.

Child and Youth Counselor, Dafne Blanco-Sarlay, visited the camp one day. Other DGESS staff also paid visits while the youth were on the land.

Mahsicho, Lois Philipp and Niroja Thiru, for arranging this outing for DGESS youth.



Danita Minoza (L) and Charlotte Landry (R)



Students work to set the fish nets. Student Jayniah in the foreground



Left to right, Isaiah Elleze, Jayniah Sabourin, Audrina Gargan and Goliah Landry



Left to right, James Labrecque, Colton Landry and Pat Gargan



Left to right, Pat Gargan, Trent Gargan, Audrina Gargan, Colton Landry, James Labrecque

FORT PROVIDENCE RECEIVES \$86,000 FROM FOOD BANKS CANADA

In February, 2022, the principal of Deh Gáh Elementary and Secondary School, Angela Griffin, was able to obtain \$86,000 in funding from Food Banks Canada. The money is to feed the people of Fort Providence.

On February 9th, 2022, every household received a voucher at the Northern Store for \$250.00. Other funding was given to the hot lunch program currently run through the Youth Center but subsidized with funding obtained by Principal Griffin. Any remaining funds will go to feeding the children at school by providing healthy snacks, including daily fresh fruit and vegetables for all of the children. Students at Deh Gáh

do not go hungry.

Principal Griffin has a valued relationship with Food Banks Canada. Principal Griffin applied for funding through Food Banks Canada and was able to bring in cases of frozen chicken and frozen Atlantic Salmon for the Dehcho and Sahtu communities on three different occasions throughout 2020-21.

Principal Griffin is grateful to Food Banks Canada for its continued generosity. The people of Fort Providence have repeatedly benefitted from the generosity of this organization.

Mahsicho, Food Banks Canada!



Fort Providence District Educational Authority
P.O. Box 254
Fort Providence, NT X0E 0L0
T: 867-699-3501 F: 867-699-3525

ON BEHALF OF DGESS
PRINCIPAL ANGELA GRIFFIN,
WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT A
\$250 FOOD VOUCHER IS TO BE DISTRIBUTED
TO EACH HOUSEHOLD IN THE
COMMUNITY OF FORT PROVIDENCE
THROUGH THE NORTHERN STORE COURTESY
OF FOOD BANKS CANADA.
NO TOBACCO OR GAS TO BE PURCHASED.

MAHSI CHO, PRINCIPAL GRIFFIN
AND FOOD BANKS CANADA!
STAY SAFE!

DEH GÁH SCHOOL ON REMOTE LEARNING IN EARLY 2022

BY: ANGELA GRIFFIN

Deh Gáh Elementary and Secondary School (DGESS) decided to go to remote learning after the 2021 Christmas break. In January 2022, in light of an alarming spike in Covid cases within the hamlet, the Fort Providence DEA elected to keep the school closed until February 21st, 2022. This decision was made to protect the health of the staff, the students and the Fort Providence community at large. Immediately, the wonderful staff of DGESS prepared learning packages

and delivered them to the homes of their students while carefully adhering to Covid protocol. The Dehcho Divisional Education Council (DDEC) supplied Deh Gáh high school students with personal electronic devices (computers) and internet turbo sticks to participate in online learning. Nimisha Bastedo, the remarkable Deh Gáh secondary school teacher, set up Google Classroom for DGESS secondary students. DGESS Child and Youth Care Worker

(CYCC), Dafne Blanco-Sarlay, created and photocopied Mental Wellness packages for students from JK to Grade 12 to help students during this period of remote learning. Dafne wanted the students to realize they are not forgotten nor are they alone. Dafne included her work cell number and email address in the packages she assembled and put a picture of herself and her therapy dog, Acerina, on the cover of the packages. Teachers delivered the CYCC's packages with the student's regular homework deliveries. Teachers like Diana Gargan, Grade

2&3 teacher extraordinaire, delivered special Valentine's Day packages to students that included a Valentine's Day card in Dene Zhatie as well as yummy heart-shaped cakes, chocolate Hersey kisses, heart-shaped jelly candies and tiny cinnamon hearts to say: WE LOVE YOU AND MISS YOU!!!! Though the academic needs of the students have been met remotely by Deh Gáh's dedicated staff, we miss being with our students at school and we are counting the days until we are at school together again on February 21st, 2022.



Teacher, Diana Gargan delivers work to Karissa Sadowick and Skyla Sadowick



Phoenix Krutko receives Valentine's Day treats and homework package from teacher Diana Gargan



Secondary Teacher, Nimisha Bastedo, delivering homework to the homes of secondary students



Pierre Elleze receives Valentine's Day treats and homework package from teacher Diana Gargan



River Bonnetrouge accepts Valentine's Day treats and homework package from teacher Diana Gargan



Kaleb Sabourin receives Valentine's Day treats and homework package from teacher Diana Gargan

A SUCCESSFUL WELLNESS SYMPOSIUM TOOK PLACE IN FORT PROVIDENCE LEADING UP TO VALENTINE'S DAY

BY: ANGELA GRIFFIN

Leading up to Valentine's Day, the Deh Gáh Got'ı̨ Dehcho First Nations in Fort Providence showed love for its residents by hosting a Wellness Symposium from Thursday, February 10th to Saturday, February 12th, 2022. Frank and Beverly Hope from Shake the Dust Hope Consulting hosted wellness workshops and offered one-on-one counseling sessions to the adults of Fort Providence. The sessions were held

in the boardroom of the beautiful Snowshoe Inn. Covid protocols were closely adhered to and all sessions were strictly confidential. The leadership in Fort Providence recognizes the continual toll Covid has taken on the well-being of its residents and the Dehcho First Nations quickly sprang into action to offer some help and hope to its people. Mahsicho Dehcho First Nations!

Ways to Wellness & Self Love

In Person Workshops

Dehcho First Nations has partnered with Shakes the Dust Hope Consulting, Frank & Bev Hope to host Wellness Workshops and One on One Counselling Sessions in your Community.

Feb 10th THURSDAY	Feb 11th FRIDAY	Feb 12th SATURDAY
1 pm - 4 pm Workshop	1 pm - 4 pm One on One Sessions with Frank or Bev	1 pm - 4 pm Workshop
5 pm - 8 pm One on One Sessions with Frank or Bev	5 pm - 8:30 Community Talking Circle Meal Provided	5 pm - 8 pm One on One Sessions with Frank or Bev

WHERE: SNOWSHOE INN BOARDROOM

CPHD Guidelines and Community COVID Guidelines will be followed
Double Vaccination Required
Masks Required
Max of 20 people per Workshop. First come, First Served.
Door Prizes at Every Workshop



All inquiries and sessions are strictly confidential

for more information contact:
Email: a.okrainec@gmail.com
Ashley Okrainec: 250 714 6279
Frank & Bev Hope: 1 (867) 444 5787

LEARNING IS FUN AT ECHO DENE SCHOOL

We have all been working hard to provide our students with the best possible learning environment that is safe and engaging for all.

"For the things we have to learn before we can do, we learn by doing." — Aristotle

With the challenges of the pandemic, we work to provide the students with a classroom design that focuses on health and safety while still promoting engagement, collaboration, and productivity. The students have been busy working on hands-on activities to boot their engagement and prioritize their creativity in the classroom

- Picture 1- introducing fun hands-on activities matching shapes

and colour in kindergarten shape recognition

- Pictures 2 and 3- Spaghetti Tower Marshmallow Challenge

This activity encourages the design mindset and supports basic engineering principles

- Picture 4 - Stick pull!
- Picture 5- Chemical Reactions creating carbon dioxide gas to inflate a ballon
- Pictures 6 and 7- During Playtime, Dene Yatie is used to reinforce vocabulary
- Picture 8- Literacy remains the core of our vision at EDS. The Decho literacy goals support this

vision Ms. Quinn uses Reading Aloud in her classroom to help improve her students' information-processing skills, vocabulary and comprehension.

- Picture 9- the students are learning to blend paint colours
- Picture 10- Congratulation to Ms. Quinn and Ms. Bailey for winning the Thank You For Making a Difference Draw
- Community Walk-The caring spirit was alive and well here at Echo Dene School as we supported The community Walk For Family Violence Awareness Month in Fort Liard. Our grade 7 Jenna Sutherland won the Poster Contest.

Please join me in "giving thanks" to our 2022 elected DEA members. Thank you, Hillary Deneron (Chair), Hebert Berreault (Trustee), Freda Berreault, Janna Deneron, Mel Kotchea, Genevieve McLeod and (Kathie McLeod, Secretary & Hot Lunch), for your amazing support, time, and energy towards the success of our school.

To the EDS parents; Every day, we pray that all of you will be able to visit the hallways and classrooms of our school to witness the many smiles, laughs, and learning that we get to enjoy. We know this day will come soon. Please know that your child is safe and happy.



Taliya Browning-Bertand



Zachary Berreault



Dayton Antoine



McKenna Deneron and Cooper Wilson



Carlene Sassie



Harlie Bughhins and McKenna Deneron



RJ Tremblay



Ms. Quinn and her students.



The students are learning to blend colors



Ms. Quinn and Ms. Weber with their students Jaana Sutherland and RJ Tremblay, winning the **You make a Difference** draw



Community walk



Jenna Sutherland

THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

On December 13th at noon the students, teachers, parents, Elders and community members, braved the -27 deg. temperatures and participated in our Christmas concert – OUTDOORS!

The students, and teachers, with the help of the DEA chair, performed the Christmas story and the students and teachers performed a rendition of the Newfoundland Mummers. They

danced to the music. Everyone loved it!

Everyone stayed for lunch of fish chowder, freshly baked bread toasted over the fire, lemon pie, tarts and lemon cheesecake, in our outdoor Gathering Place. It was truly a wonderful experience and most stayed well into the afternoon enjoying each other’s company and conversation.

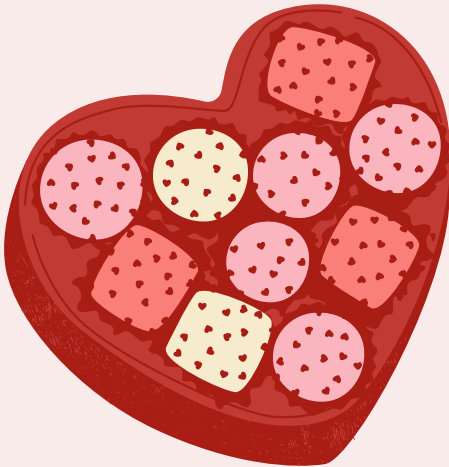


BEING HELPFUL/SHOWING KINDNESS

Kindness is much more than words or even deeds. Kindness is an inner quality that needs to be cultivated. The students of Kakisa Lake are practicing kindness by bringing in wood for one of our Elders who is not well. They also take food, from their cooking program, to the Elders, on a regular basis. The students and teachers take time to help someone in need and are learning by doing; are putting kindness into action; learning community service; helping someone else and in the end helping themselves! What a wonderful feeling we get in return!



Se Dene
Zhatie
Monieto



Indigenous Languages Month

www.ddec.ca

SE DENE ZHATIE MONIETO

TRANSLATES AS

I LOVE MY DENE LANGUAGE.

CAN YOU PAINT A PIG?

Well the students in Kakisa can. As part of the After School Program the students worked online with a real artist who showed them the basic techniques to painting- what brushes to use, filling background colors and blending colors. Together with the

artist, Mrs. Kelly Manuel, they painted a pig. The artist spent two hours with the students. Both the students and the artist loved the experience. The students are so looking forward to their next session.



A RECIPE FOR READING FLUENCY

Did you know that reading with good expression improves reading comprehension? This is called reading with fluency. To become a good reader, it is important to start practising fluency and good expression early. However, it's never too late to learn and it's so important. Here's how you can help your child read with fluency.

Ingredients:

- A book that is fun!
- Books with talking or dialogue are great.
- A just right book- not too easy and not too hard! (Easier books are great for practising fluency.)

Instructions:

- 1) Always take a breath at a period or a comma. Make your voice go up before a question mark. Make your voice sound excited before an exclamation mark! Pause when you see... All of these tiny punctuation marks are not hard to read, but they make a big difference to reading

- fluency.
 - 2) Read groups of words together. Make it sound like talking. When you put the right words together, it just sounds better.
 - 3) No speeding! When you read a book a second time, you can read the words a little faster, but don't go too fast! Practise just-right reading.
 - 4) Some words need to be stressed. It sounds more interesting that way. For example, I love reading! The word love is stressed.
 - 5) Read the book again...and again. Read to a younger brother or sister, or an auntie or grandparent.
- Most of all, have fun reading. This recipe makes 1 fluent reader.
- Three of my favourite books for practising fluency:
- The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, by Jon Scieszka
- Grandma and The Pirates, by Phoebe Gillman
- Green Eggs and Ham, by Dr. Seuss

BEING ACTIVE AFTER SCHOOL

In Kakisa school never stops at 3:30pm. That's when our after school program takes over. The program operates daily and almost every weekend. Students like staying after school. They like being active both outdoors and inside. They are pictured here making a snow fort; creating a bridge from popsicle sticks; baking; making bracelets; snowshoeing and being creative with tooth picks.



JEAN MARIE RIVER

SHARING WHAT WE HAVE AT CHRISTMAS

Louie Norwegian School delivered Christmas cookies throughout the community and prepared Christmas baskets for local elders. The children baked treats, made homemade soup, and created Christmas cards for the community elders. 2021 marks the third year of this tradition, promoting values such as sharing and respect for elders. This is especially important during the pandemic when we must limit contact to keep community members safe, and when we can all use a reminder of how important community and togetherness can be.

Photo

From left to right: Elissa Garrett (principal), Aurora (kindergarten), Kierstyn (grade 4), Gunde (grade 4), Felix (kindergarten), Ideza (grade 3) with Rhonda (support assistant), Martin (grade 8), Shaylyn (grade 8), Sechie (junior kindergarten), and Zayden in the back left (grade 9)



FORT SIMPSON

KINDERGARTEN AT LKES LEARNS ABOUT LUNAR NEW YEAR

Students at LKES kindergarten learned about Lunar New Year. They read stories, watched videos, and talked to people about it. They learned about monsters, good fortune, and what not to do during the Lunar New Year period. We were treated to good food and treats from Pandaville to help us with our celebration. We learned to use chopsticks and did a dragon dance. Some of our fortunes were 'Be Positive' and 'Helping your friends is like helping yourself'.



Fort Simpson

NEWS FROM FORT SIMPSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Covid-19 School Engagement Events – Feb. 15th

On February 15th the Chief Public Health Office (CPHO) staff came to Liidlí Kue Elementary School to present two engagement sessions with our students during the school day as well as an evening session for parents.

The morning session consisted of the CPHO staff presenting Therapeutic Arts to our JK to Grade 6 students. The afternoon session gave our grade 1 to 6 students an opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Andre Corriveau, A/ CPHO.

Morning Session: Therapeutic Arts

The CPHO staff presented a strengths-based therapeutic arts workshop to all students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6. The goal of this workshop was to help children think of all the ways that they are strong, and can be strong,



when dealing with tough times – that there’s a superhero inside all of us that lets us be super strong when we are scared or worried, or even just when things are hard.

Using a variety of arts and crafts supplies, each student made their very own superhero mask, that reflected the things they were good at and the ways that they help others. Some of the masks were based on existing superheroes with qualities that we admire (how Batman tries to keep people in his city safe from bad guys), some were based on things that make us feel strong (trees and plants, or rainbows), and some were based on concepts and symbols that we’ve seen elsewhere that speak to us (like a mask that reflected the comedy/tragedy masks, and reminds us that we get to choose our own best actions).

This was a very student-led activity, with guidance and support from teachers and facilitators, and was concluded with a quick discussion of “power poses”, and how they can sometimes help us to feel strong when we need a reminder.

The students at Liidlí Kue Elementary School loved this session and they each walked away with their very own mask that represented them and their “power”.

The staff at LKES would like to thank Nancy MacNeill for engaging our students in this wonderful activity and bringing out our students’ inner superheroes!



Afternoon Session: Dr. Andre Corriveau

The afternoon session was hosted by Dr. Andre Corriveau and Rachel Oystrek. Mr. Leach dressed up in a Covid-19 bubble suit and escort each class to the gym for their scheduled times. Each class was given 30 minutes to sit with Dr. Corriveau and ask him any questions that they might have had with regards to Covid-19, vaccines, or anything else health related. Our students were very well engaged in these sessions, and they asked some very good questions.

At the end of each session the students were given a poster to colour for prizes, frisbees, stickers, and cool pens that look like vaccination needles. Many of the students then loved pretending to “vaccinate” Mr. Leach with these pens, and by the end of the day Mr. Leach was feeling much better.



New Fridge and Stove for LKES Healthy Foods Program

Thanks to a \$5000 donation from the Village of Fort Simpson the school was able to purchase a new commercial refrigerator, which arrived in January. In addition to this new fridge, the Unity store has also donated a new stove for the kitchen as well. Both these items, the fridge and stove, will play an important role in helping us deliver healthier foods to our students.

The new fridge will allow us to buy and store more fresh foods (fruits, vegetables, dairy, meats, and other perishables) for our healthy foods program. We are also looking to set up a milk program and this fridge will give us the capacity to do this. The new stove, when it arrives, will also help us with our healthy foods program as well as in the preparation of hot lunches, feasts, etc. We look forward to having our staff and students use these new appliances as part of their learning programs moving forward.



Fort Simpson

News from Fort Simpson Elementary School (CONT'D)

Valentines Day Activities

This year we had several activities planned for our students for Valentine’s Day beyond the usual classroom parties. On Friday, Feb. 11th the Open Doors Society held a Pop-Up Shop for students to buy gifts for their parents, siblings, and anyone else that they wanted to. Every student was able to participate in this, just as they were for the Christmas Pop-Up shop. On Monday, February 14th students started the day with pancakes with their favourite toppings (syrup, whipped cream, fruits, etc.) as well as sausages.

Some of our older student helped to make pancakes for their own class and they seemed to enjoy starting their day off in this way. In the end,

every student was able to enjoy a hot breakfast and start Valentine’s Day off properly. Classrooms then did their traditional parties and every one of our students received Valentine Cards.



School Hoodies

At the start of the school year, we decided to design an LKES school hoodie for our students and staff. After receiving \$6,000 in donations (\$2,500 from the Dehcho Friendship Society and \$3,500 from the local District Education Authority) we went about the process of designing the hoodies. After much consideration and many conversations, we decided on emphasising and showcasing the Dene Laws, Culture, and Language. Our final design reflects this as we incorporated the Dene Drum on the front and the hoodies with the words “Live the Dene Way in both English and Dene Zhatie. On the back of the hoodies, we decided to showcase all nine of the Dene Laws in both English and Dene Zhatie. Finally, we placed our school crest on the left

shoulder of the hoodies.

Once we finished with the design, we ordered 110 hoodies, just before Christmas, using the donated money we received. They arrived at the start of February, and we gave them out right away to our students. Since receiving their hoodies our students have been wearing them all the time and with great pride. In fact, many of our parents and community members have asked if they can buy some for themselves or as gifts for others. We are currently taking collecting these requests and will be sending out another order for clos to 100 new hoodies. We are very proud of these hoodies because they promote the Dene Laws, Language, and culture and we look forward to seeing people wearing them at the LKES as well as all around town.



Introducing Our New Teacher

Rebecca Ruda: New Grade 1 Teacher at LKES

Hi! My name is Rebecca Ruda and I moved to Fort Simpson mid-November from Winnipeg. I have my partner, dog, and two cats with me! I have loved exploring Fort Simpson and getting to meet the wonderful members of the community. Some of my passions include writing, photography, and attempting new crafts. I have enjoyed taking over the Grade 1 class and getting to know my students and their families. We are working hard and having lots of fun!



FORT SIMPSON

GREETINGS FROM LKRHS!

BY: BENJAMIN ADAMS, PRINCIPAL

Greetings from LKRHS!

Since our last report we have seen some bumpy but interesting events unfold both community-wide and at the school level. We were heavily struck with a wave of covid shortly after Christmas break, had cancellation of diploma and final exams for semester 1, went four weeks without in-person instruction, postponed student council events and canteen services, and cancelled senior high classes for two days to help trump transmission of covid among students. Additionally, we even dealt with a bomb threat since our last report. Nonetheless, these were educational moments that helped us understand the full extend of working together as a team and to learn there truly is something positive in everything that we face.

In January we provided learning packages to students for four weeks as part of our ongoing promise to help those learning remotely during our school closure. LKRHS staff were quite impressed with the number of parents and students who reached out for additional help with learning packages and also impressed with the number of picked up and returned packages in general. When we reopened our doors on Monday, January 31, we welcome all students back with a continental breakfast. The smiles on both staff and students’ faces to see each other again were priceless! We also had a Pancake & Crepe breakfast on Valentine’s Day followed by schoolwide activities. Umm umm good!

In addition to our Valentine’s Day festivities, we also had another special

treat at LKRHS -local musician Wesley Hardisty. Violinist Hardisty spent the day preforming and providing lessons to our students. They were very much encouraged by Mr. Hardisty in discovering their musical side and, being a local musician, were inspired to dig deeper into his roots and how he became such a professional. In turn, Mr. Hardisty explained to our students that they too can excel in whatever they choose to do in life. Mr. Hardisty, Mahsi Cho for gracing us with your presence, educating our students, and sharing your music and stories. (See figure 1.)

Bomb threats are no laughing matter and, even in our some village, we take such threats seriously. On Wednesday morning, Feb. 2, at approx.. 10:52 it was brought to our school administration’s attention that a social media post regarding a bomb threat was directed at our school. We immediately followed protocol and had our building evacuated to the elementary school. The building was clear in less than 1:30min. where our local RCMP were

impressed with our staff and students in carrying out a speedy process. It is important to recognize our elementary staff, DDEC, and DEA who corresponded effectively and promptly in helping to make appropriate arrangements and overseeing steps in moving forward. I have said it numerous times: “It takes a team!”

With the announcement of covid restrictions slowly lifting, LKRHS are hoping to hold its Education Week from Feb. 28 - Mar. 4. Getting back to a “new norm” will take time but we have all fought this together and learned to be patient. In saying that, our Education Week activities will have some activities that we have not had the liberty of enjoying in quite some time, such as moderate mixing of cohorts and outdoor team events. It will be nice to see a semi-school approach once again, while keeping covid restrictions at the foreground.

Lastly, it is unfortunate that some of our families were stung badly by the

last wave of covid in our community. LKRHS staff felt it was crucial to recognize these strains by providing a care package to these families. We were limited in funds and therefore only provided approximately ten hampers to date. These hampers were based on our breakfast program menu such as eggs, milk, cereal, meat proteins, and basic pantry supplies. (See figure 2.) We appreciate our students and the efforts their parents/guardians make in supporting the need for a sound education. Our LKRHS staff are always available to help our students’ families in finding proper supports. We cannot always promise a positive resolution but rather a team effort in trying. Mahsi/thank you!



WRIGLEY

COVID REMOTE LEARNING AT WRIGLEY - PARENTAL ROLE AND SURPRISES

BY: SYLVESTER BOADI, PRINCIPAL

Like any other place, the COVID-19 pandemic caused major upheaval at Wrigley, sending students home to remote learning after the Christmas break and leaving teachers and parents scrambling to adapt. But the situation also created the opportunity for a deeper appreciation of parents’ respective roles and challenges. As educators, we quickly activated all the relevant online learning tools that we have at our disposal with the sole aim of making learning accessible, fascinating, and relatively easy for the students. In addition, we made enough learning materials available, especially for students who have no internet at home. These strategies

worked perfectly because of parental involvement and support. For instance, some parents started calling for more learning materials for their children much earlier than we expected. What is most surprising is that these parents ensured that what the students have completed were returned to us for an assessment. Besides, some parents were so friendly and discussed openly with us about their expectations. I really appreciate the support these parents gave and encourage them to keep it up. Together, we can assist our children to realize their talents and grow to become useful citizens, functioning effectively in their respective communities.



SMALL COMMUNITY UNITED WAY GRANT

BY: WILL MAGNO

I am pleased to announce that United Way Northwest Territories has approved funding for our 5 Small Schools in the Dehcho Divisional Education Council (DDEC). The United Way Grant follows the three principles:

- (1) From Poverty to Possibility
- (2) Healthy People Strong Communities
- (3) All That Kids Can Be

The grant is designed to help kids do well at school. United Way Northwest Territories is providing us with the funding amount of \$7,500 in order to help bolster technology, food security, and clothing materials for our 5 Small Schools in the DDEC. We are thankful of the partnership between the DDEC and United Way in order to help us meet the needs of our students learning and growing in small communities!



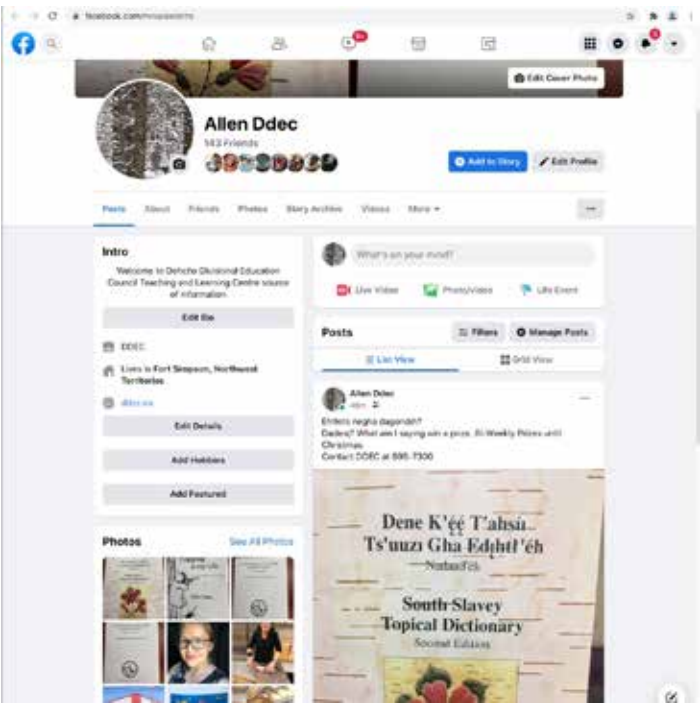
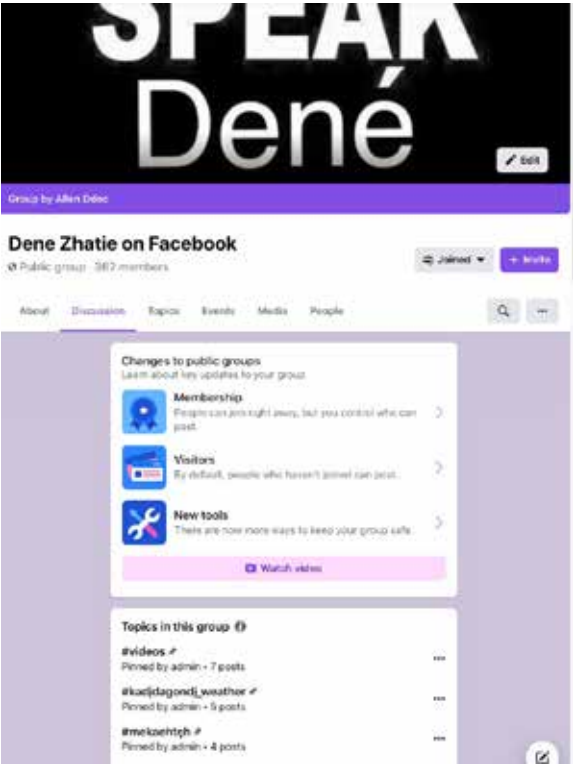
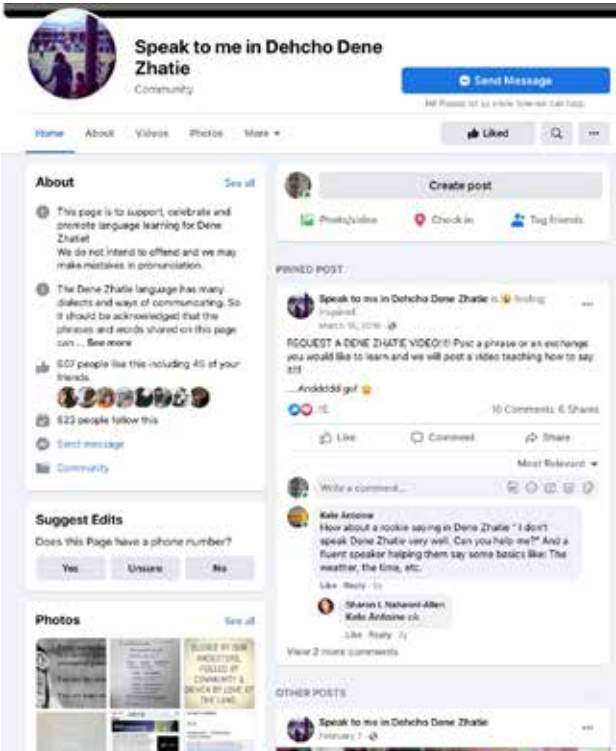
Beautiful NWT!



GROWING FLUENCY IN DENE ZHATIE

Dene Zhatie is a beautiful language and speakers have a variety of tools to strengthen their skills and fluency.

We encourage you to make the best use of the apps and opportunities to practice the language.



ddec.ca

Nezu dek'enedı vs Nats'edezhı

Azhıı danetı

Nezu dek'enedı

Dzenę ahdé

Nats'edezhı

Dzenę okı

Dattha anetı

Dzenę ahdé

Tai Hono Sadzë

Azhıgha

Gozhá nadezhı

Nats'edezhı

Dágondeghá

Neghá katthë

Gozhıı gots'ë gotthı nats'edezhı

Datthá

Hono oo dıı dzë

Dzenę kiozhı



ddec.ca

Self-Care vs Taking A Break

Activities

Self-Care

Do Long Activities

Taking A Break

Do Short Activities

Duration

Usually Takes a Full Day

Usually Takes Up to 30 Mins

Purpose

To Feel Relaxed After a Long Week

To Feel Rested in The Middle of Work

Outcome

A Refreshed Body and Mind

A Rested Body and Mind

Timeline

Can be done 2 days a week

Can be done everyday