



# THE ARROW

NEWSLETTER OF THE MFNERC

## Message from Executive Director



Greetings Educators! I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome spring. The birds are singing, the sun is hot and the snow is almost all gone. It was a long cold winter for us all and I am sure we are welcoming the new season with open arms.

The Manitoba First Nations Science Fair was once again a great success. I thank all the school staff, volunteers and students who participated. I would like to acknowledge Rudy Subedar and his team for the immense amount of time they spent planning and organizing this exposition of students' knowledge and skills.

The Lighting the Fire Conference is upon us. The theme for this year's conference is Sounding the Drums: Reclaiming our Rightful Place in First Nations Education. It promises to be another outstanding event, with numerous and diverse speakers and workshops. Our annual spring conference provides excellent opportunities for educators to strengthen professional relationships

and network to meet new professional contacts. I encourage the delegates to mingle, meet and share. Drop by the Smoke Signals interactive technological survey booth and the LTF Corner Café where educators can come together, dialogue and discuss workshops and current educational issues. Visit the LTF Tradeshow also in the Wellington Room.

One of the videos recently produced by MFNERC is entitled *Dropping Out Changes Your Life*. MFNERC staff Wayne Grafton and Nicole Magne collaborated with the students and staff from Southeast Collegiate. Be sure to check it out on YouTube under the same name.

On behalf of the staff and management of MFNERC, it is our hope that you enjoy this issue of *The Arrow*. You can upload it from the MFNERC website at [www.mfnerc.com](http://www.mfnerc.com) which includes other information about the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre.

Lorne C. Keeper, Executive Director

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*The Arrow* is now accepting submissions! We're looking for creative, inspiring stories about your school and community. Please send your ideas and/or stories to [info@mfnerc.com](mailto:info@mfnerc.com).

# Cyber Safety Sites

In today's digital age, the Internet has become the main way many of us communicate, learn, research, and even meet people. Given all the different social media platforms, there is an ever-growing amount of open communication avenues available to anyone with Internet access. Because of this fact, it is important to be aware of who we, and our children, are interacting with, and what information our children are sharing. Below are several websites that teach and promote cyber safety to children, parents, and educators.

## Cyber Safety Tips From the Government of Canada

[healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids-enfants/safety-internet-securite/index-eng.php](http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids-enfants/safety-internet-securite/index-eng.php)

[www.getcybersafe.gc.ca](http://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca)

To ensure you're safe on the Internet, you must stay aware. These government websites offer advice for online safety including articles on important safety rules to share with kids, what to watch out for while online, photo sharing, using webcams, and online gaming. Other topics on this site include signs that a child or teen may be experiencing problems online such as bullying or exploitation.

## Media Smarts

[mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/educational-games](http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/educational-games)

Media Smarts offers free online games to introduce kids to important issues about digital and media literacy. One of the games is called "How cyber-savvy are you?" This quiz tests kids' knowledge about online security risks they may face each day. Once the 11-question quiz is complete, the correct answers are shown with expanded tips on staying cyber safe. Other games include a digital literacy tutorial for secondary students, a tutorial for basic Internet literacy for students in Grades 4-8, as well as two fun online privacy games aimed at children aged 10 and under.

## FBI Cyber Surf Islands

[sos.fbi.gov](http://sos.fbi.gov)

In this game created by the FBI, students travel to distant islands and learn about Internet safety. The game offers different destinations for each grade level beginning from Grade 3 to Grade 8. Once on an island, students visit different areas where they complete mini games such as word searches.

After students complete the mini games, they take a quiz to test their knowledge. With great graphics and an educational component, this fun site is a valuable resource for Internet safety.

## Cybersmart

[cybersmart.gov.au](http://cybersmart.gov.au)

Designed by the Australian government, Cybersmart is a program that provides information to educate children about how to be safe online. The website



Cybersmart Online Games

is geared towards kids and teens, parents, educators, and other teaching staff. It includes free educational resources on topics such as safety tips, cyber bullying, inappropriate or offensive content, privacy, security, and unwanted contacts. There are fun games and resources broken down by age group, as well as a specific section for parents and schools.

\* Some content retrieved from *TEACH Magazine*, Jan/Feb, 2014

The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. is proud to announce that we will be commencing publishing activities for the benefit of our First Nations schools.

Our focus will be on the publication of literature grounded in education that has strong indigenous content, with particular attention given to our cultures, histories, and languages. As this is a new initiative, we need to start by understanding your needs. Please take a few minutes to answer the following:

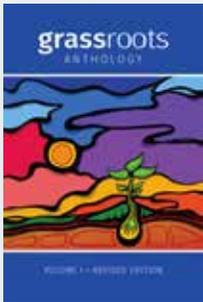
- *What type of books do you require?*
- *What books would be most beneficial to your students' learning experience?*
- *What would be the ideal book to have in your classroom?*
- *What kind of indigenous content has been difficult for you to find?*

Please send your ideas/questions/feedback to:

**David Robertson, Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. Publishing Operations Manager**

Email: [davidr@mfnerc.com](mailto:davidr@mfnerc.com) | Fax: 1-204-942-2490

# Recent Publications at MFNERC

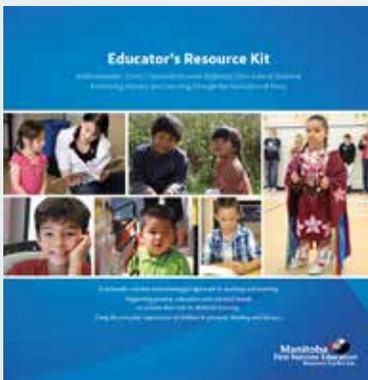


## Grassroots Anthology Volume I, Revised Edition

In July 2013, MFNERC published a beautiful, 70 page *Grassroots Anthology* and we recently revised it for republication. The same short stories, poems, fine art and photography by Manitoba First Nations artists are now in a paperback-sized version.

With this anthology we hope to inspire young people to develop and pursue their own creative aspirations so they may also share their stories.

For more information contact Olga McIvor at [olgam@mfnerc.com](mailto:olgam@mfnerc.com).



## Achimowaywin (Cree) | tipaahchimoowin (Ojibway) | hitu kaka pi (Dakota)

*Enhancing Literacy and Learning through the Mediation of Story:*

### Educator's Resource Kit

This user-friendly kit will help early years teachers and other educators incorporate First Nation storytelling into the early years' provincial ELA curriculum.

Contents include planning tools, an annotated bibliography listing First Nations storybooks at the appropriate reading level, 17 blackline masters for students and teachers, and assessment tools.

June Montour, who developed and wrote the kit, and Crystal Durgan, Grade 1/2 Teacher at Sioux Valley School, will introduce this new resource during presentations at the MFNERC Lighting the Fire Conference.

## Problem Solving in Math

An informative booklet (draft document) that explores problem solving, one of the seven mathematical processes outlined in Manitoba provincial mathematics curriculum.

Its contents include: definitions and explanations of two types of problem solving, the 4-step process for solving problems, 10 problem solving strategies, and a First Nations perspective.

This resource will be introduced during the MFNERC 2014 Lighting the Fire Conference, to encourage ideas and feedback from educators. For more information contact Elmer Everett at [elmere@mfnerc.com](mailto:elmere@mfnerc.com).

## The Handshake and the Pipe

The first in a series of three First Nations themed stories for early readers, *The Handshake and the Pipe* explores the significance of, and similarities between, the peace pipe and handshaking.

With accessible writing by Betty Lynxleg and appealing, colour illustrations by Don Monkman and Amber Green, you'll want to share this book with your students when it comes out this summer. A joint project between MFNERC and Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba.

For more information contact Olga McIvor at [olgam@mfnerc.com](mailto:olgam@mfnerc.com).

# Achieving Mino-Pimatiziwin in Sagkeeng

Contributed by: Kim O'Laney, Vice-Principal, Sagkeeng Consolidated School



Keynote Address:  
Kevin Chief, Minister of Children  
& Youth Opportunities

In partnership with MFNERC, Sagkeeng First Nation was bustling with excitement March 24-26, as three education events were held at our schools.

On March 24th a Community Education Forum on assessment was held with the theme "Celebration of Learning". Teachers and students worked hard during the day to set up numerous displays to showcase the great work they have been doing over the past term. Everyone from nursery to Grade 12 took part.

The evening was filled with information sessions, presented in between some lively bingo games. There was also a celebration feast, and a gallery walk. Eighty-four parents and community members were in attendance plus staff from all three schools. The majority of feedback was very positive and parents found the sessions helpful. Many parents also said they would be interested in participating in a school advisory committee. We would like to congratulate all of the students

on their success. We are proud of their achievements and celebrate the learning they have done!

We'd also like to acknowledge and commend all of the teachers for their hard work, and all the parents/guardians and grandparents for their support.

On March 25th & 26th Sagkeeng's schools hosted a mini-regional educational conference with the theme "Mino-Pimatiziwin: Promoting Positive School Health Practices and First Nation Perspectives."

Sagkeeng First Nation is committed to providing a quality education where all students are encouraged to achieve personal success. When our schools were first given the opportunity to host this event, the planning committee decided to focus on health and wellness, which we believe is needed if we are to achieve mino-pimatiziwin (the good life). We also believe in embracing our Anicinabe language and culture, enriching community involvement, respecting diversity, and providing a safe, positive learning environment. As such, the goal of the conference was to promote positive mental health

practices and to use the medicine wheel framework to promote traditional First Nation Aboriginal approaches to health promotion. A wide variety of sessions were offered including: the Sweat Lodge, Workplace Health & Safety, Mental Health, Classroom Climate, Inclusive Education, Early Childhood Education and Land-Based Programming.

Through the process of planning for the conference, the schools networked with many local health and wellness professionals who graciously volunteered to present at the event. An invitation to attend was extended to many local organizations. We also had visitors from Brokenhead, Bloodvein, Oxford House, Little Grand Rapids, and Swan Lake whom we would like to thank for taking part.

There is critical need for comprehensive health and wellness planning in First Nations schools and communities, particularly given the health and wellness issues that have arisen as a consequence of the intergenerational effects of residential schools and colonization. As administrators we need to embrace the vision of building healthy schools and use a wellness lens



as the basis for fostering the emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental health in our schools and communities.

On March 25th & 26th Sagkeeng's Schools also hosted an Elders' roundtable with the theme: "Elders' Perspectives on Achieving Mino-Pimatziwin (The Good Life)". The purpose of this roundtable was to obtain feedback on developing school plans in the areas of culture and language. Twenty elders were in attendance, and they all shared their varied perspectives on achieving mino-pimatziwin. There were many wonderful presentations including those by Dave Courchene, MFNERC specialists and different local organizations including Indian Residential School (IRS) Education

Credits and Sagkeeng Cultural Education Center. As well, a school Elders' advisory group, formed from those present, committed to continue working with the schools on language and culture programming.

March 25th, the events were wrapped up with a banquet and entertainment to celebrate with our staff and Elders. Guests shared a delicious dinner made by Winola and Lauren Canard while enjoying great entertainment that included Jody Gaskin, Larry Guimond, Les Sinclair, Patrick Fontaine, Jodie and Adam Sanderson, Wa Wa Tay Square Dancers, APMA Winner Ali Fontaine, and Canada's Got Talent winners Sagkeeng's Finest! Our Sagkeeng talent makes us proud!



Participants in Workshops

On behalf of Sagkeeng's three schools we would like to thank everyone who took part in making all of our events such a success. Gitchi Meegwetch!

## School Profiles

### Otter Nelson River School and George Knott School

*The MFNERC provides resources and training to 58 First Nations run schools across Manitoba. We are pleased to showcase these schools in each issue of The Arrow - Newsletter of the MFNERC. If you would like to see your school highlighted in The Arrow please email us at [info@mfnerc.com](mailto:info@mfnerc.com).*



Otter Nelson River School

**Otter Nelson River School, Cross Lake First Nation**  
[www.crosslakeeducation.homestead.com](http://www.crosslakeeducation.homestead.com)

For the two schools on Cross Lake First Nation – Mikisew Middle School and Otter Nelson River School – education is a blend of culture, tradition and technology. The schools are holistic and realistic in outlook. Staff relates learning not only to academic development, but also spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical growth. Otter Nelson River School accommodates students in nursery/kindergarten, Grades 1-4 and Grades 9-12.

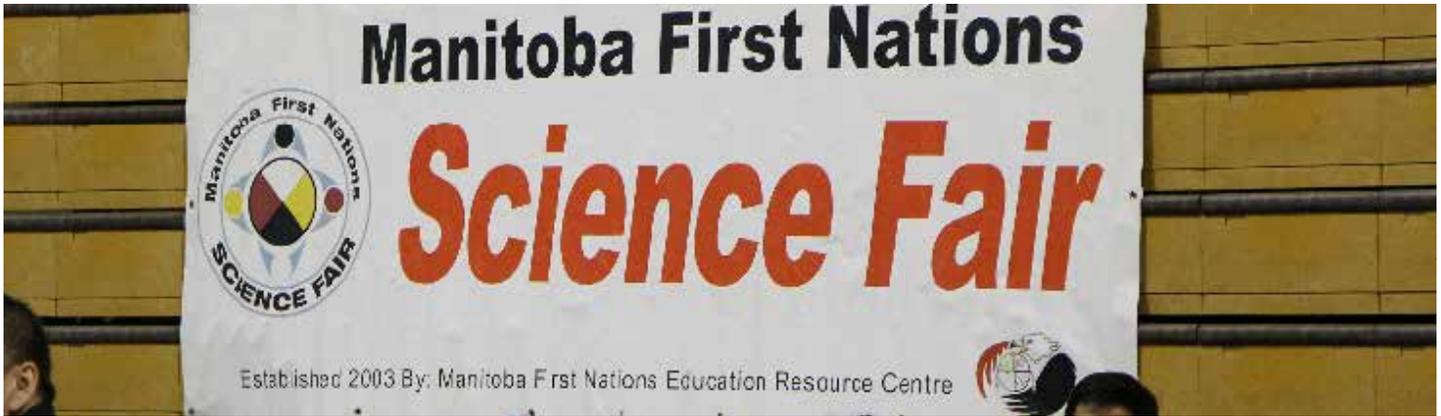


George Knott School

**George Knott School, Wasagamack First Nation**  
[www.wasagamackfirstnation.ca](http://www.wasagamackfirstnation.ca)

George Knott School, of the Wasagamack First Nation, seeks to forge a promising path and build a place with no lack of opportunities for students to prosper. With over 500 students from nursery to Grade 12, the school has made traditional learning a part of the school curricula. The language and culture program includes a guidance program component that is inclusive of traditional values and Elders' teachings within the classroom. The school is named after a former Chief, who belonged to one of the 11 families who formed Wasagamack First Nation.

# Manitoba First Nations Science Fair 2014



Earlier this spring, on March 11 & 12, 2014, students from 36 First Nations schools across Manitoba gathered at the University of Manitoba's Max Bell Centre to share and celebrate their love of science. The 11th Annual Manitoba First Nations Science Fair (MFNSF) was, yet again, marked by a number of milestones. Among these, the event reached its largest size to date both in number of schools (36) and number of students (466) participating. At this size it is also the largest science fair in Manitoba; even larger than the Manitoba Schools Science Symposium, which this year attracted 450 student participants, and one of the three largest

of the 102 fairs held across Canada. At this point, only Metro Toronto and Calgary Youth Science Fairs are larger than the MFNERC's. This phenomenal proliferation of science activity in our First Nations schools will contribute significantly to our long-term goal of significantly increasing the number of students who successfully pursue their love of science right through high school and into post-secondary.

Another significant attribute of this year's exhibition was the high number of authentic, community-based research projects. Over twenty-five percent, 67 of the 238 projects exhibited featured investigations of real problems or issues in students' own communities, which is very high compared to what is typical at similar fairs, where about 5% can be expected to be original and authentic research! The growing emphasis on this type of work, which demands increasingly advanced language arts, mathematics, and thinking skills; and connects school work to the real world, no doubt contributed to the high level of enthusiasm and pride exhibited by students as they shared their work. The sense of relevance and of contribution attained by students conducting research to solve real problems in their communities can only result in greater feelings of interest and accomplishment. Indeed, some observers commented that they could feel the energy on the floor emanating

from almost 500 students eager to present their research to visitors and judges.



Significant growth was also evidenced by the increased proportion of students achieving the Gold Standard of Excellence for their work. This year, following student interviews, project reviews, and judges' deliberations, 73 students achieved Gold Medals, 127 achieved Silver Medals, and 266 achieved Bronze. Finally, four students were selected to represent Manitoba at the national level. These students are: Matthew Condappa, Grade 9, from Nelson House; Kayla Sutherland and Kelly Sutherland, Grade 11 from Peguis; and Dylan Harper, Grade 12 from Red Sucker Lake. Our delegation of finalists will travel to Windsor, Ontario, May 10-16, where they will exhibit their work at the Canada-Wide Science Fair, along with the top 400 young scientists selected at regional science fairs across Canada this year.

The cast of 70 science fair judges, who interviewed the students and reviewed their projects, included

over 30 scientists, professors, and other individuals from the scientific community at large, many of who have been participating in the MFNSF from its earliest years. The feedback from those judges represents another milestone in the overall level of work being completed and presented by our students. As one long-time judge, who has served at all 11 MFNSF events to date, as well as every MSSS provincial fair for the past 43 years put it, "The work displayed was so thorough and well done, the judges could have done their work without the students there; but the students also, were so well prepared to present and explain their work that the judges could have done their job without the project displays there!" A higher compliment could not be paid to our young scientists. The staff of MFNERC congratulates each and every one of our students on the level of work and enthusiasm exhibited at the 2014 MFNSF. Appreciation and congratulations are also extended to



Rudy Subedar

the dedicated teachers and parents providing the commitment time, and support necessary for the growth and achievement demonstrated by these students.

For a complete list of projects and awards, and pictures of the fair visit our website at <http://www.mfnerc.org>



# A Note from the North

On April 16 & 17, MFNERC hosted the Northern Principals' Roundtable in Opaskwayak Cree Nation. The theme of the meeting was "WETATOSKEMITOWIN: We Work Together to Keep our Children in School," and the many informative presentations and activities all focused on this important goal.



Wayne Grafton

Wayne Grafton, MFNERC's Student Transition Specialist, facilitated the first morning's activities and conducted a workshop entitled Increasing Student Success and the Student Retention Program. Wayne also showed a video recently produced by MFNERC, *Dropping Out Changes Your Life*. This video can be seen on our website at [www.mfnerc.org/resources/student-retention-resources](http://www.mfnerc.org/resources/student-retention-resources).

Irene Huggins, Literacy Specialist and Chun Ong, Numeracy Specialist then presented a fun and engaging workshop on Reading as Thinking. Students can take this school-initiated course as an elective and it teaches them to clearly read content in all areas of study. The ultimate goal of the course is critical literacy, which assists in all subjects, including math and science. Critical literacy gives students the ability to go beyond what the text says (literal comprehension), what the text means (inferential comprehension), and what the text does (critical comprehension). Irene Huggins reminded the principals



that if they choose to add this course to their school, MFNERC Literacy Specialists will be on hand to support them with materials and expertise.

In the afternoon of the first day, the principals visited Egg Lake to study the Engaged Learners Program, an initiative of Frontier School Division.

The following day, Karen McGillvary, Principal of Joe A. Ross School gave at tour to the participants. This was followed by a tour of Oscar Lathlin Collegiate, hosted by principal Ron Constant.

## Keep in touch and up-to-date!



Check us out on our newly designed website [www.mfnerc.com](http://www.mfnerc.com) for more information on our organization including *The Arrow Newsletter*, eNews, the MFNERC organizational chart, community maps, photo gallery, merchandise and other resource materials. Follow us on Twitter @MFNERC and Like us on Facebook at Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre to stay up-to-date with events and recent activities.



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