

VISION

“Support First Nations to develop and implement a comprehensive holistic educational system inclusive of First Nations languages, world views, values, beliefs and traditions with exemplary academic standards, under First Nations jurisdiction.”

MISSION

To help First Nations improve education for all learners to achieve:

- *mino-pimatisiwin (Cree, Ojibway, Oji-Cree)”*
- *honso aynai (Dene)”*
- *tokadakiya wichoni waste (Dakota)”*

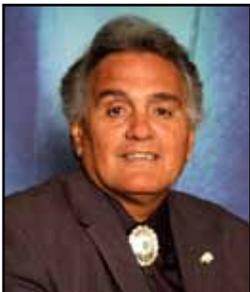


Principals' Newsletter

www.mfnerc.org

June 2011

Message from the Executive Director By Lorne C. Keeper



On behalf of the MFNERC Board of Directors, staff and management, it is with great pride that I congratulate all the students who participated in the 2011 Manitoba First Nations Science Fair which took place at Red River College, April 6 & 7. Included in this congratulatory notice is a big thank you to all teachers, school administrators, parents and MFNERC staff who took part in supporting the students in their efforts to expand their knowledge and experience in the world of science. The winners of this year's MFNSF went onto the Canada Wide Science Fair in Toronto, Ontario. We wish them well in their future endeavors in science and all its related fields.

The 13th Annual Lighting the Fire Conference took place at the Victoria Inn Winnipeg, May 11-13 and was a great success! Thank you to all the participants, presenters, and MFNERC staff for their hard work and diligent efforts.

The 2011 Lighting the Fire Student Essay Contest Winners are: First Place Junior Winner: Kenzie Wilson from Mikisew School, Pimicikimak Cree Nation; First Place Senior Winner: Christal Barkman, Garden Hill High School, Garden Hill First Nation; Second Place Junior Winner: Jody Bouletter-Isaac Beaulieu Memorial School, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation; Second Place Senior Winner Alyssa Hart from '72 Memorial High School, Bunibonibee Cree Nation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers and parents who support the LTF Student Essay Contest participants to ensure the students have the chance to exercise their writing skills in a competitive but creative

arena. I'd also like to thank the MFNERC English Language Arts specialists who work very hard on making this contest a success year after year. For those interested in seeing the essays, please check out our website at www.mfnerc.org.

The annual Maria Ross Awards Banquet took place Thursday, May 12 at the Victoria Inn, Centennial Ballroom. Four outstanding educators from the First Nations of Manitoba were honoured at this banquet: Amie Martin from Chemawawin First Nation; Joan Hudson from Peguis First Nation; Annie Bear from Peguis First Nation and Nancy Okemow from God's Lake Narrows First Nation. Congratulations to the 2011 Maria Ross Award recipients!

As this year winds down it is my hope that each and every one of you recognize the great contribution you make as a teacher, a principal or educational support in the classroom or school. The MFNERC's Vision Statement is as follows:

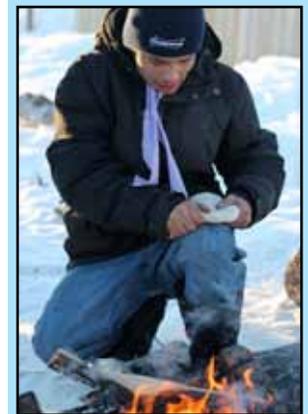
“Support First Nations to develop and implement a comprehensive holistic educational system inclusive of First Nations languages, world views, values, beliefs and traditions with exemplary academic standards, under First Nation jurisdiction.”

This philosophy of this vision continues to be woven through all the MFNERC activities whether the teams are conducting a training session with your school, hosting a regional gathering or assisting a teacher via phone or email. It is our intent to ensure that the tools we at the MFNERC offer are close at hand to support what you the educator have taken on as a responsibility of grand importance; helping students through the critical years of development.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Joy Keeper, Communication & Conference Coordinator at the Winnipeg Office at 204-594-1290 or toll free at 1-866-319-4857. We welcome your inquiries.

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“Stand up to your obstacles and do something about them. You will find that they haven’t half the strength you think they have.”

- Norman V. Peale

MFNERC to Host Western Canadian First Nations Administrators Education Symposium

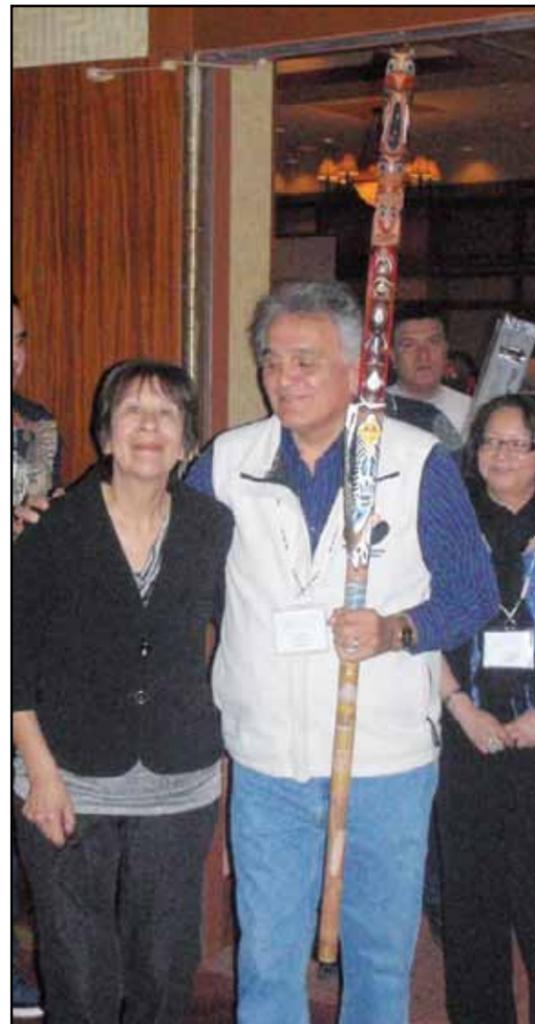


MFNERC staff in Alberta. From L to R, Sandy Robinson, George Ross, Lorne Keeper, Gwen Merrick and Violet Okimaw.

The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre is proud to announce the hosting of the 8th Annual Western Canadian First Nations Administrators Education Symposium. Staff from the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre attended the 7th Annual held in Enoch Cree Nation, Alberta at the beautiful River Cree Resort from March 10-12, 2011. This three-day event had such esteemed speakers such as National Chief Shawn Atleo, Dr. Martin Brokenleg and Chief Rose Laboucan.

On the last day of the event, Friday, March 12, the Kitaskinan Education Authority of the Enoch Cree Nation, handed over the sacred staff to Lorne Keeper, Executive Director for the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. Mr. Keeper proudly marched the sacred staff out of the conference during the grand retreat accompanied by MFNERC colleagues. Currently the MFNERC are planning and organizing for this gathering which will be taking place in Winnipeg, Manitoba in the spring of 2012. Stay posted for details as announcements regarding this exciting conference will be forthcoming!

Gwen Merrick and Lorne Keeper, MFNERC staff, Western Canadian First Nations Administrators Conference, Edmonton, Alberta: on behalf of the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, Mr. Keeper, accompanied by friend and colleague, Gwen Merrick, had just accepted the sacred staff to host the 2012 Western Canadian First Nations Administrators Education Symposium.



Swan River Workshop By Loretta Sinclair, Speech Language Pathologist

Team Leader Sandy Robinson, ELA Specialist Irene Huggins, Special Education Specialist Richelle Lovegrove, Math Specialist Chun Ong, Speech Language Pathologist Loretta Sinclair, and Technology Specialist Dave Thiessen presented at the Swan River Assessment Training Workshop on January 24-26, 2011. The two schools that participated in the Swan River Workshop were Joe A. Ross School (Janice Steiner, Crystal Constant, Debbie Sinclair-Houle and Gordon Miller) and Neil Dennis Kematch Memorial School (Connie Monkman, Gerald Lafreniere, Velma Quill and Cora Cook). One teacher from Grade Three, Seven, and Eight and a Resource Teacher from each school attended the training workshop.

Monday morning began with introductions and a presentation from each school was given to see where they are in terms of the Assessment Process.

In the afternoon, the team introduced the “Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind: Assessment for Learning, Assessment as Learning, and Assessment of Learning” document. Some were not completely clear on the differences between the for/as/of learning at the beginning of the session, but became clearer by the end of the training session.

Tuesday morning began with a presentation on Grade 7 Student Engagement. There was a lot of sharing and laughter during this time as we participated in activities.

The Grade 8 Writing Expository presentation took place in the afternoon. The activities sharing during this presentation brought a greater understanding on how to create rubrics for classroom assessment. The participants also had an opportunity to work with Persuasive Writing and its different forms.

Wednesday morning was reserved for the Grade 3 Numeracy presentation. Participants were involved in many Math activities. They really enjoyed this part of the workshop. A lot of laughter, participation and sharing took place.

After each presentation, the participants were given an opportunity to share how the day went for them. This was the most valuable time, as it gave each participant insight on what they have to work toward to ensure the assessment process will be attained in each of their schools.

Many friendships were developed and partnerships created. Steps for the local phases were determined before leaving the training session and both schools are willing to support each other. All the information that was shared during the three days was compiled electronically and given to each school, including the work and plans they did during their presentations. We all had a great time together working through the assessment process and look forward to coming together again for the further development of this process.



Front Row (L to R): Velma Quill, Gerald Lafreniere, Cora Cook, Connie Monkman; Second Row (L to R): Loretta Sinclair, Crystal Constant, Debbie Houle, Janice Steiner, Gordon Miller, Chun Ong; Back Row (L to R): Sandy Robinson, Irene Huggins, David Thiessen, Richelle Lovegrove.

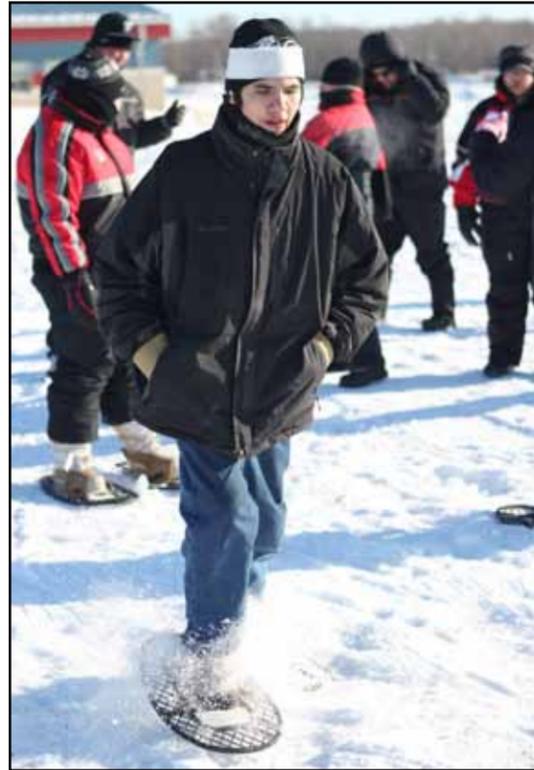
The love of learning, the sequestered nooks, And all the sweet serenity of books.
- Henry W. Longfellow

“Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit.”

- Jawaharlal Nehru

Ininiwi Metawewina Pimacihona: First Nations Cultural Games *By Rudy Subedar*

The first annual First Nations Cultural Games for Senior High Students was hosted by the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre and Sapotaweyak Education Authority, at Neil Dennis Kematch Memorial School on the Sapotaweyak Cree Nation Reserve, February 8-10, 2011. The event was envisioned, designed and planned collectively by the Senior High First Nations Land Based Educators Group. The Land Based Educators Group has been working



collaboratively for the past 4 years to develop and advance land based education in our FN schools. The successful launching of the Cultural Winter Games Program represents an important milestone within that strategy.

The overall strategy includes: collaborative program development and sharing of ideas and unit plans; promotion and demonstration of the rich and motivating context which the natural environment provides for personal and academic development; ever increasing integration with the academic program of the schools; development of the group and individuals within it as resource people; preparation and presentation of workshops on the integration of outdoor education and

academics; and raising the profile of land based education programs within our high schools, both among teachers and students.

To this end, an annual gathering of senior high students to emphasize, demonstrate, and celebrate the skills embedded in our land based education programs was envisioned. The inaugural event was attended by 84 senior high students and 28 staff from 7 First Nations high schools across Manitoba. The format of the Games digressed from conventional competitions in one very significant way. The 49 male and 45 female students were organized into 8 teams, such that each team included students from every school present. The adults in attendance were, likewise, assigned to teams as staff advisors. Teams spent three days participating in a total of 18 events, each designed as a cooperative challenge emphasizing cooperation, problem solving, and team planning; and integrating skills and knowledge from the range of land based/outdoor education programs being taught in the various schools.

The event was an immense success, with overwhelming positive feedback and demonstrated positive outcomes in all the schools evidenced in our follow up to the games. Among these are: incidences of students returning home an immediately beginning to initiate and lead their schools in planning and fund raising for next year's participation; grade 12's who participated asking to return to their schools to take 'extra credits' next year, just so they can continue involvement in this program; reported increases in attendance and participation in general school life by students who had been to this event; and a doubling of the number of schools calling to express interest in joining in for next year (20 to date), including provincial schools, and one group from out of province, to name a few.

This year's gathering saw registered students from Tataskwayak, Cross Lake, Opaskwayak, Fisher River, Peguis, God's River, and of course, the host school, Sapotaweyak. The students and staff from God's River travelled 21 hours non-stop, over mainly winter roads to be a part of the celebration. The only thing more impressive than the incredible productivity of the students participating was the strong bonds

that developed between them in such a short period of time. The benefits of such connections and relationships are beyond measure.

Over the course of the gathering, students participated in 18 events that ranged: from log sawing and splitting, fire making, tea boiling and bannock making; to shelter building, snow sculpture, and archery; through team exploration definition and banner design; jigging, goose and moose calling; arm and leg wrestling; to actually going out on the trail and snaring rabbits. The range of activity offered opportunity for everyone to contribute and shine within their teams. The overall format resulted in students from all schools present getting to know each other and building bonds right from the moment of arrival. The care and attention of the host committee and school made for a very high quality experience for all the visiting students and staff. On behalf of all participants, the writer recognizes with deep gratitude the contribution of principal, Mrs. Carter; meet director, Mr. Leask; and the rest of the staff of Neil Dennis Kematch Memorial School for organizing and hosting a great event. We look forward with eager anticipation an equally



exciting experience in Fisher River next year. Finally, the vision of the Land Based Educators Group, and their efforts in making this event a reality should be recognized. The MFNERC recognizes the efforts and commitment of this group: Edwin Beardy, Split Lake; Danny Halcrow and Elaine Beardy, Cross Lake; Randy Koshel, Opaskwayak; Edmund McKay, Oxford House; Alderick Leask, Sapotaweyak; Gerry Mason and Davin Dumas, Fisher River; and Mike Sutherland, from Peguis, who designed the activities and informed development of the technical package for these first games. In addition to the many local volunteers who contributed to a very successful implementation of these games, the writer would also like to recognize the contributions of MFNERC staff, Curtis Carriere, Nicole Magne, and Amber Green who provided diligent on-site support for the event.

Planning for the second annual First Nations Senior High School Cultural Winter Games begins this month. For further information, or to become involved, please contact MFNERC Integrated Program Development Specialist, Rudy Subedar at 204 594 1290, or e-mail: rudys@mfnerc.com.



“As the soil, however rich it may be, cannot be productive without cultivation, so the mind without culture can never produce good fruit.”

- Seneca

“Books let us into their souls and lay open to us the secrets of our own.”
- William Hazlitt

Scholastic Book Fair By Ina Hollet, Joe A. Ross School

As I begin writing an expression of disappointment is what I hear when a student walks into the library with his teacher, “aw, the book fair’s gone!” In June we held our sixth Scholastic Book Fair over a two year time span. The room had been brightly decorated and the books attractively displayed. Posters and novelty items such as pens, pencils, folders and markers are bonus items for those students with less available cash. In addition, staff members have purchased gifts, teacher resources and prizes for their classrooms.



Our school administration at Joe A. Ross School has supported and encouraged these events and the Scholastic Book Fair administrators in Saskatoon are helpful, encouraging and full of ideas. Four of the six Scholastic Book Fairs helped us realize almost six thousand dollars worth of product for our needy library. And half our June profits enable Scholastic Canada Ltd. to place new Scholastic books into Children’s Hospitals through the Children’s Miracle Foundation, as well as aid Big Brother Big Sister organizations.

Organizing the Scholastic Book Fair is especially enjoyable because we engage grade five and six students in the publicity, decorating, promotion, setting up, selling and dismantling of the fair. They eagerly wait for the application forms to be available each autumn. It is difficult for me to turn anyone away from the act of volunteering, especially when we are promoting literacy. My



assistant is invaluable in handling the money as well as contributing in all the above activities.

In Opaskwayak we are fortunate that we can rely on the local radio station, CJAR, to diligently advertise for us. The Natotawin, our local paper, publishes our dates and times as well. Parents of Opaskwayak Cree Nation support literacy by bringing their children to Family Evenings and generously purchase books and notions. Scholastic donates books for raffle for individual students and their classroom libraries. Two of the yearly Scholastic Book Fairs are held during Parent Teacher Conferences. This fact greatly enhances our profits.



From book fair profits we have purchased easy books, novels and curriculum-related non-fiction that the students truly enjoy. Our goal is to promote literacy at every age and to continue linking the activities and contents of the library to the curriculum.

We concluded Scholastic Book Fair number six. Our students, staff and community members should be proud that they contributed over seven hundred dollars to Scholastic Book Fair’s involvement in the Children’s Miracle Foundation and Big Brothers Big Sisters Organization. Another successful literacy project is concluded with great success.

Lighting The Fire By Joy Keeper, Communications



The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre proudly hosted the 13th Annual Lighting the Fire Education Conference to over nine hundred delegates from

On the second morning, keynote speaker Dr. Jennifer Katz, assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, spoke about inclusive education and her experience working in diverse classrooms for sixteen years of her career. Most powerfully evident was Dr. Katz sharing and caring for the people who she has worked with and for. Currently, Dr. Katz is writing a book on “Creating Compassionate Communities: Teach to Diversity and the 3 Block Model of Universal Design for Learning”.

across Manitoba and Canada. From May 11-13, this year’s conference theme was “Education & Assessment: Achieving a Good Life”. The keynote speakers included Gerald Kuehl who

is an esteemed portrait artist who has travelled across northern Manitoba from the remote communities to towns and settlements. In his speech to the delegation the first morning, it was evident that many of the people in his portraits, which



were projected onto four big screens, were people many of the participants knew from their own communities. One in particular was the father of Lorne Keeper, Executive Director of the MFNERC, and it was a touching story Mr. Kuehl told of Joseph I. Keeper from Norway House Cree Nation.

Over the three days, thirty eight workshops were held including two offsite workshops. Workshop registration was filled to capacity with diverse presentations, from curriculum based models, to hands on workshops such as “Traditional Games in the Class”. The Maria Ross Awards Banquet and the LTF Tradeshow had great participation as did the annual Lighting the Fire Student Essay Contest. If you would like copies or to read the essays of the Student Essay finalists, please check the Centre’s website at www.mfnerc.org.

The Lighting the Fire Planning Committee thanks all the participants, presenters and MFNERC staff who made this year another great success!



Student Essay Contest Winners Left to Right: First Place Junior Winner: Kenzie Wilson and First Place Senior Winner: Christal Barkman, Second Place Junior Winner: Jody Bouletter-Isaac Beaulieu Memorial School, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation; Second Place Senior Winner Alyssa Hart from '72 Memorial High School, Bunibonibee Cree Nation.

“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”
- Robert M. Hutchins

MFNERC Communications Updates By Joy Keeper



This past winter brought me to the First Nations schools for workshops and gatherings. It was a great experience for me in that I was able to see firsthand the amount of planning, work and effort that goes into making these sessions possible. Clearly it is a collective approach that happens, not only on the part of the staff of the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre but also the incredible effort made by the staff and administration of the schools, including community members who help coordinate.

I had the privilege of being at the Lake Manitoba First Nation School and the Little Saskatchewan H.A.G.M.E. School for workshops. Then I attended the Cross Lake Regional Education Conference on Assessment, and the 7th Annual Fisher River Community Education & Regional Conference. I had opportunities to watch the MFNERC specialists in action while they were presenting and to see the incredible commitment by teachers and principals to ensure the best possible environment to conduct these events.

The Crisis Intervention workshop is a highly physical workshop and would be an asset to anyone working with youth and with Gertrude Sanderson, MFNERC Special Education specialist



Gertrude Sanderson, Crisis Intervention Workshop, Cross Lake Regional Education Conference on Assessment

leading this workshop, she makes it a whole lot of fun but all the while communicating the critical components of crisis intervention. The school planning workshop was done with a positive team approach, and it was led by Charles Fontaine, MFNERC School Planning specialist. The regional gatherings I attended had a mix of MFNERC staff and school staff presentations and it is not only a great time for learning but also networking for all participants.



Teacher Pamela Penashii and Principal Freida Missayabit, Lake Manitoba School

I hope you enjoy the photos from these travels.

If you would like further information on the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. and our activities, please contact me, Joy Keeper, Communications & Conference Coordinator at (204) 594-1290 or email me at joyk@mfnerc.com.



Library, Lake Manitoba School

Above: Walking Stick Workshop, 7th Annual Community Education & Regional Conference, Fisher River First Nation.

Manitoba First Nations Science Fair 2011 By Rudy Subedar

The 2010-2011 science fair season, has come to a close after another successful year for hundreds of our students. This year our provincial science fair held on April 6 & 7 at Red River College saw participation by 395 Grade 4 – 12 students from 25 schools. Participating schools included: Amos Okemow Memorial School; Charles Sinclair School; Chief Sam Cook School; Dauphin River School; Ebb & Flow School; George Knott School; God's Lake Narrows School; Indian Springs School; Isaac Beaulieu Memorial School; Joe A. Ross School; Keeseekoweenin School; Lake St. Martin School; Little Saskatchewan School; Long Plain School; Mikisew Middle school; Neil Dennis Memorial School; Otetiskiwin Kiskinwamatohwegamik School; Otter Nelson River School; Peguis Central School; Petit Casimir Memorial School; Pinaymootang School; Sagkeeng Anicinabe Consolidated School; Sagkeeng Anicinabe High School; Sergeant Tommy Prince School; Southeast College; and 1972 Memorial High School.

In addition to the almost 400 students who attended the MFNSF over 1300 students participated in 26 local school fairs leading up to the provincial event. This large scale participation represents a critical mass which is expected to continue, significantly advancing the amount of emphasis on science education in our FN schools. The MFNERC commends and appreciates the efforts of the many teachers from all the schools whose commitment and extra effort make this program possible.

From the Manitoba First Nations Science Fair, held in April, four students were selected to represent us at the 2011 Canada Wide Science Fair, held recently in Toronto. Wilson Coyne, Grade 8, from Sagkeeng Junior High School presented his project "Saving the Ojibway Language". In this project Wilson conducted extensive surveys (over 300) collecting data on the state and extent of Language loss in his community. He then examined the data for trends, and followed up with studies with elders and fluent speakers to arrive at recommendations, program designs and a strategy for language recovery in the community. Cheyanne Stove, who attends Grade 10 in Little Saskatchewan completed an experimental study comparing different types of insulation. From her studies she was able to determine which types of home insulation slows heat conduction the best, and which maintains its integrity over time the best. Our third project



Top to Bottom: Jillette Linklater and Desiree Wescoup; Wilson Coyne; and Cheyanne Stove.

at the national level was completed by Jillette Linklater and Desiree Wescoup, from Opaskwayak. These two young scientists investigated experimentally the effectiveness of Dream Catchers to stop bad dreams. They were able to determine by combining their test results with information from elder interviews that FN ancestors had discovered thousands of years ago what modern psychological sciences have caught up with in recent decades – an understanding of the powers of the human mind to control even our own dreams through the power of suggestion and the ability to believe.

The MFNERC is very proud of the professional manner in which these four students carried themselves during the week in Toronto, and with the high quality of their work. With the perseverance demonstrated in completing their research, and the level of skills and knowledge they developed through the process, we have no doubt that they will continue to make us proud in the future.

As we move into our tenth year of the MFNSF program, we look forward to participation by students from even more schools (aiming for 30+ schools and 500+ students) next year. Again we congratulate all the students who participated in this year's program and thank all the hard working teachers who supported their efforts.



“Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.”
- Anthony D’Angelo

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Wapaskwa
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Congratulations

On Behalf of the
Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre
Staff and Management we would like to
Congratulate all 2011
Manitoba First Nation Graduates

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