Drumming lessons with Leland English and Sheldon Day Chief

Students at Agnes Davidson, Nicholas Sheran, Park Meadows, G.S. Lakie, Gilbert Patterson and Wilson Middle School have been learning traditional Blackfoot drumming. Leland English and Sheldon Day Chief have taught the students how to drum and the songs that are sung at powwows. Some of the students will be showing off their drumming skills at the Annual District Powwow on May 26th.

Round Dance at General Stewart – Kelly Russell Thunder-Chief

The entire school at General Stewart enjoyed an afternoon learning about the Round Dance. Sheldon Day Chief provided the history and the teachings behind the dance. He then taught the dance to all students and staff.

They were taught variations to the Round Dance and the distinct difference in the drumming. As well, they learned about the traditional technique of the dance and the friendship dance. They also learned about some of the folklore involving the “Spirits of the Northern Lights or the Aurora Borealis”.

For more information about First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Services, go to our new website:

www.fnmilethsd51.ca

Or check us out on:

Facebook – FNMI Education SD51

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In the Classroom – Sherri Terpstra

Grade 4 students at Nicholas Sheran wrapped up their Fatty Legs Novel study with an Elder visit from Betty Ann Little Wolf. Betty Ann (pictured below) shared her experience in Indian Residential School.

Fatty Legs is based on the true experiences of Oleman (Margaret Pokiak-Fenton), a young Inuit girl who chooses to go to residential school so she could learn to read. She soon learns that the school is not a nice place to be because once there, she is forced to cut her hair off, forget her language and use a new name that is chosen for her.

Grade 4 students at Dr. Probe School enjoyed learning about the Medicine Wheel and learning some Hoop Dancing tricks from Maria Livingston, Hoop Dancer.

They also played some traditional First Nations games with Jaron Weasel Bear from the Piikani Traditional Knowledge Society. Jaron Weasel Bear is pictured below.
Iisohtsiik: Moving Forward – Kelly Frewin, LCI Drama teacher

On Thursday, April 13, high school students from Lethbridge Collegiate Institute in Lethbridge, FP Walshe in Fort Macleod, and Kainai High from the Kainai Reserve presented “Iisohtsiik: Moving Forward” at the Empress Theatre. This unprecedented event required the students to create an original script using a devised theatre process. Students explore perspectives around the relations of settlers and First Nations in southern Alberta. The show, which used a horse as the motif, was presented to schools in the afternoon, and to the general public in the evening. Around 400 people attended the performances.

This is the first ever joint production between schools from Lethbridge, Fort Macleod, and the Kainai Reserve. The idea came about after teachers Duane Petluk, Ramona Big Head, Kelly Frewin, and John Poulsen from the University of Lethbridge, were discussing implementation of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission while working on curriculum development for Alberta Education. They decided to work on this joint production to help bring their different communities together. Each school created a 15-minute presentation on their own, and then they brought their pieces together to create a unified production for the public.

The show opened dialogue both between the students involved in the production, and the audiences who witnessed the event. With the ideas of the horse being central to each schools’ presentation, the students explored cultural and historical perspectives, as well focusing a light on the cultural ignorance and racism that the students witness.

This production was an important step in creating dialogue and connections between the different communities. It is a first step on the path to reconciliation and a deeper understanding and appreciation for everyone involved in the process.
Art Gala at Mike Mountain Horse School

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit students at Mike Mountain Horse worked diligently for a six week period to create some very exquisite pieces of art. Different grades worked with different mediums, incorporating history of the First Nations people.

The Grade ones and twos created a Buffalo Hide story out of stressed brown paper using petroglyphs then describing their story in written form.

Grade three created a “Tipi Scene from the Past” diorama box using molding clay.

The Grade fours and fives created a two dimensional painting on canvas. The art involved sceneries painted on canvas and then a foam cutout was added for dimension.

To showcase the astounding talent, and to close out the art classes, a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Art Gala was held at Mike Mountain Horse during the school’s Celebration of Learning evening. This allowed for the parents of the students to visit the school to see their child’s art work on display.

“I could not believe the amount of talent that was in my room and the amazing beautiful masterpieces that were created. Each student put so much effort, heart and soul into their creations. Leaving even themselves amazed at what they could do. I am very grateful to the wonderful Admins and staff here at Mike Mountain Horse for the support shown during the six weeks. They too were quite amazed at their student’s talented ability”.

Kelly Russel Thunder-Chief
Students from elementary, middle and high schools come together once a month to participate in mentorship activities. The students buddy up and get a chance to get to know each other through activities and games. Starting in November, the students have met together twice. The group will continue to meet monthly until May. Please see below for the theme of each month’s activity.

November – Rock Your Mocs
December – holiday decorations
January – rock climbing at U of L
February – Random Acts of Kindness

March – Galt Museum field trip
April – traditional games (cancelled - snow)
May – Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump field trip
Career Quest Program 2016-2017

Year Review - Maria Livingston

Throughout the school year 20 First Nations, Métis and Inuit high school students within the district completed the Career Quest program. This program focused on career & post-secondary exploration, and employability skills. Group workshops focused on topics such as scholarships & post-secondary funding, budgeting, employment tips & interview skills.

Students also got the opportunity to tour post-secondary institutions & employment centers, hear from First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in post-secondary, and attend job fairs. The program concludes with a recognition lunch held on May 16th to celebrate the students’ commitment to making a conscious effort to prepare for their future. Students interested in joining the program next school year can contact the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Career Facilitator or First Nations, Métis and Inuit Liaison at their school.
Education is Our Buffalo

Acknowledging Territory in Our Schools

Schools in Lethbridge School District No. 51 are now acknowledging the traditional territory of the Blackfoot people. Some schools acknowledge every day at the beginning of the day, some acknowledge at the beginning of special events such as assemblies and others have placed plaques on their school site walls that state the acknowledgement.

Roy Pogorzelski did a presentation on Métis Jigging at Fleetwood-Bawden
Maria Livingston performed hoop dancing at Park Meadows
Travis Plaited Hair welcomed Minister Eggen and his entourage to Wilson Middle School
Dr. Probe Canada 150 celebrations: Roy Pogorzelski jigging; Peter Weasel Moccasin explaining acknowledging territory

Community Information:
Read On program at Lethbridge Public Library
Read On assists adults (18 years+) learn skills to reach their daily life or career goals. One-on-one tutoring and work at our own pace. Call 403-320-3133

Coming Events
May–June – Welcome to Kindergarten evenings
May 16th – Career Quest luncheon
May 18th – Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump field trip for mentorship group
May 26th - Annual District Powwow at Nicholas Sheran Elementary
June 13th – First Nations, Métis and Inuit Grad Ceremony at Victoria Park gym

More District FNMI Events