INDIGENOUS EDUCATION GATHERING 2025

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ATTAUSIKUUULUTA -
Working All Together

MANITOBA COLLABORATIVE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION BLUEPRINT

theme
THE FIRE WITHIN

STEERING COMMITTEE
TOWN HALL

271 people from 18 community organizations, 13 First Nations, 11 post-secondary Institutions, 12 school divisions, Government, Industry, & Academic partners all turned out to make this Gathering a success!

FEBRUARY 6-7, 2025
Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre

12 Breakout SESSIONS

TIWAHE ~ LI FAAMII ~ MINISĪWIN ~
INDINAWEMAAGANAG

MCIEB Elders Council - Ron Cook, Barbara Bruce Ivy Chaske, Mark Hall, Myra Laramee, Susie McPherson-Derendy

2 STUDENT PANELS

KIND HART SINGERS

INDIGENOUS IDENTITY AFFIRMATION POLICIES

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
MOE CLARK

RÉAL CARRIÈRE

ATTENDEES REPRESENTED THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES:

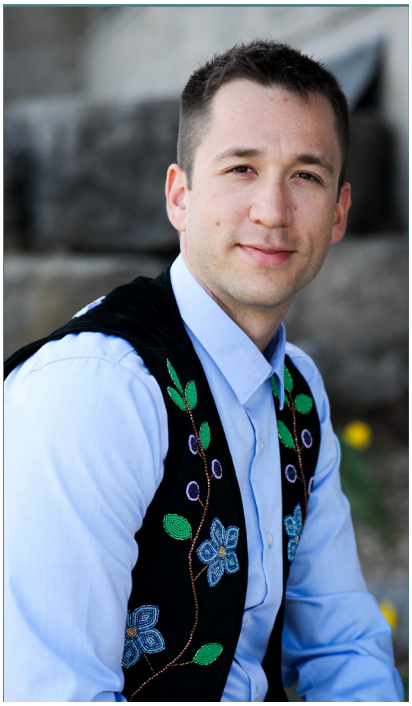
- 2SPIRIT CONSULTANTS
- 2SPIRIT MANITOBA
- ANISHINABE IKWE
- ASSINIBOINE COLLEGE
- BIMAASHI MIGIZI MASHKIKI GIKINOO' AMAAGEWINAN - (SEMT)
- BRANDON UNIVERSITY
- BUSINESS COUNCIL OF MANITOBA
- CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
- CIRCLES FOR RECONCILIATION INC.
- CHILD BRIGHT
- CREATIVE MANITOBA
- CMHA WINNIPEG
- CROSS LAKE EDUCATION AUTHORITY
- CROSS LAKE FIRST NATION
- ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE NEELIN HIGH SCHOOL
- END HOMELESSNESS WINNIPEG
- FISHER RIVER CREE NATION EDUCATION
- FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION
- GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA – ADVANCED EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA - MANITOBA EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING
- HC AVERY MIDDLE SCHOOL
- INDIGENOUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- INDIGENOUS EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
- INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ALLIANCE OF MANITOBA (IPAM)
- KELSEY SCHOOL DIVISION
- KINISTIN EDUCATION CENTER
- KINISTIN FN SCHOOL KINISTIN SK
- KINISTIN SAULTEAUX NATION
- LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
- LAKE MANITOBA FIRST NATION
- LAKE ST. MARTIN SCHOOL
- LAKEHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- LORD SELKIRK SCHOOL DIVISION
- LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION
- MANITOBA DEAF ASSOCIATION/ CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF
- MANITOBA AVIATION COUNCIL
- MANITOBA BAND ASSOCIATION
- MANITOBA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
- MANITOBA FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
- MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE (MFNERC)
- MANITOBA FLEXIBLE LEARNING HUB
- MANITOBA INDIGENOUS CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTRE INC. (MICEC)
- MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF TRADES & TECHNOLOGY
- MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION
- MANITOBA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
- MANITOBA TEACHERS SOCIETY
- MIKAAMING MINO PIMATIZIWIN HEALING LODGE
- MISIPAWISTIK CREE NATION
- MIZHAKIIWETUNG MEMORIAL SCHOOL
- NATIONAL CIRCLE FOR INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE AND FOOD
- NEIL DENNIS KEMATCH MEMORIAL SCHOOL
- NORWAY HOUSE CREE NATION
- OAK LAKE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
- PEMBINA TRAILS SCHOOL DIVISION
- PINE CREEK LEARNING HUB
- PINE CREEK FIRST NATION
- PORTAGE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE
- POPLAR RIVER FIRST NATION EDUCATION
- PRAIRIE SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION
- PUKATAWAGAN EDUCATION AUTHORITY
- READY SET GO WORK PROGRAM
- RESOURCE ASSISTANCE FOR YOUTH (RAY)
- RED RIVER COLLEGE POLYTECHNIC
- RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE
- RIVER EAST TRANSCONA SCHOOL DIVISION
- ST. JAMES-ASSINIBOIA SCHOOL DIVISION
- SAGKEENG FIRST NATION
- SEVEN OAKS SCHOOL DIVISION
- SKOWNAN FIRST NATION
- SOUTHWEST HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION
- STUDENT AND ANISH HEALING CENTRE
- SWAN LAKE FIRST NATION
- TECH VOC HIGH SCHOOL
- TWO-SPIRIT MICHIF LOCAL
- UNITED WAY WINNIPEG
- UNION NATIONALE MÉTISSE SAINT-JOSEPH DU MANITOBA
- UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
- UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE NORTH
- UNIVERSITÉ DE SAINT-BONIFACE
- UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
- UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
- UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
- VINCENT MASSEY HIGH SCHOOL
- WATERWAYS CANADA
- WALTER WHYTE SCHOOL
- WASAGAMACK EDUCATION AUTHORITY
- WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
- WINDSOR PARK COLLEGIATE
- YELLOWQUILL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
- YORK FACTORY FIRST NATION

KEYNOTE Sessions

MOE CLARK

âpihtawikosisâniskwêw (Métis/ mixed-settler) multidisciplinary artist Moe Clark is a 2Spirit singing thunderbird. She works across disciplines of vocal improvisation, creative arts facilitation, land-based oskapêwis support, and performance creation, to create work that centres embodied knowledge, 2Spirit Indigenous resurgence, and creative kinship. As a composer, Moe's music and voice have appeared in documentaries, films, theatre and dance performances alike. Her last solo album "Within" toured across North America and her collaborative video poem "nitahkôtân" won best Indigenous language music video at the ImagiNative film festival. www.moeclark.ca

KEYNOTE Sessions



RÉAL CARRIÈRE

Réal Carrière is Nehinuw (Swampy Cree) and Métis from Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. He was home-schooled and grew up on the land, with no road access, running water, or electricity. His current research focuses on Nehinuwak political theories, Indigenous methodology, and Indigenous political representation. He is an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba in Political Studies, with a specific focus on Indigenous politics. He is passionate about canoeing, storytelling, Indigenous knowledge, and social justice.

Tiwahe (Dakota) ~ Li Faamii (Métis) ~ Minisīwin (Ininiw) ~ Indinawemaaganag (Anishinaabe) – Ceremony

The MCIEB Elders Council had an amazing collaborative ceremony on Thursday afternoon. It incorporated many nations and traditions, included 2Spirit perspectives, built community, and created healing.

"The word that I heard the most was power. The power they felt from the ceremony that happened. It's powerful because it is sacred. There is a power when we come together as nations of people; as who we are." ~ Grandmother Ivy Chaske

MCIEB Elders Council (Left to Right):
BACK ROW: Ron Cook, Mark Hall FRONT ROW: Ivy Chaske, Barbara Bruce, Myra Laramee, Susie McPherson-Derendy

QUOTE FROM THE POST GATHERING SURVEY FEEDBACK:

"I am Indigenous, and the gathering filled me with a beautiful humility and pride. Everyone was very kind and open with knowledge and humor and I felt that those who weren't familiar with Indigenous ways had an opportunity to really be a part of important dialogues and conversations in a very welcoming way. The addition of the Elders circle was a real eye-opening experience for many. to be a part of a community circle and hear the teachings and songs of our ancestors. To me this was definitely the highlight, bringing people from different backgrounds together, hands joined, the heartbeat of the drum, and be a part of ceremony, each with a huge smile on their face. It really connected everyone and made the conference feel like a community gathering."

Indigenous Identity Affirmation

Kris Desjarlais

Jessica Barlow

PROTECTING OPPORTUNITIES PANEL:
JESSICA BARLOW, KRIS DESJARLAIS, CARLA KEMATCH

As Director of Indigenous Education, Kris Desjarlais manages the delivery of services for Indigenous students, coordinates the college's Indigenization strategy, and provides leadership in training college staff on Indigenous cultural competency and safety. A member of the Métis and Cree Nations, Kris works to ensure First Nation, Metis and Inuit students experience a respectful and engaging learning environment.

Jessica is a proud Red River Métis woman with deep roots in Manitoba. Jessica obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Manitoba and a Law Degree from the University of Manitoba, Robson Hall Faculty of Law. Jessica is a currently a lawyer in the Office of Legal Counsel at the University of Manitoba and primarily supports the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous) and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Carla Kematch is a First Nation Cree women from Sapotaweyak Cree Nation located on Treaty 4 Territory. Working at Red River College Polytechnic, she is involved in many aspects of the College to promote and increase the knowledge base around Truth and Reconciliation. She provides guidance and direction, working cross-departmentally to develop training initiatives for students, staff and faculty; policy development; research projects; and ways to identify barriers and recommend systemic changes, among many other initiatives. These initiatives are in line with the College's strategic commitment as outlined in the Strategic Plan: Commit to Truth and Reconciliation. Pursue Equity, Diversity and inclusion in everything we do.

Carla Kematch

2025 Vendors/Artists

"Many talented Indigenous makers and artists showcased their work and shopping fun was had by all!"

- Fox n' Fuddle
- ClanWear & Ogee-Cree-ations
- Colours & Clouds Bath
- Gayle Sinclaire Art
- Warnge
- Turtle Women Indigenous Wear
- Shoni Cree's
- Anishinabe Ikwe
- Natural Soul & Crafts
- Indigenous Nation Apparel Company (INAC

fun

Breakout Sessions

Did you miss a session that intrigued you? See below for a synopsis and links for more information!

THURSDAY AM

1A. Weaving Indigenous Knowledge and Emerging Technology to Indigenize Language Learning in Education

DR. RAMONA NECKOWAY, DR. MAYA RAD-SPICE

Dr. Neckoway is Vice-President, Indigenous Initiatives & Reconciliation at University College of the North UCN). Dr. Rad-Spice is Director of Programming and Operations Indigenous Initiatives & Reconciliation at UCN. Dr. Neckoway and Dr. Rad-Spice are researchers and lead a VR based language immersion project at UCN, where 70% of the student body self identifies as Indigenous. The research is grounded in Indigenous ethics as a path to reconciliation. The project Speak Indigenous XR takes assts created by UCN and Communities and embeds it into the VR environment for immersive language training. Dr. Neckoway and Dr. Rad-Spice referenced Georgian College in Ontario for creating first language immersive experience that has already made an investment. Project Turtle Island is an exchange between Canada and Australia. VR does not replace human connection; it enhances the experience. There are printed materials which (Ininiew, Anisinew and Dene) match the VR experience. Students can start their day at the store and then finish at the campfire. The project is getting headsets into the North and utilizing computers, tablets and phones. https://www.ucn.ca/speakindigenous/

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY AM

1B. A Community Education Model

FLORENCE THOMPSON, SHIRLEY THOMPSON, WANDA SPENCE

Kris Desjarlais

Shirley and Florence Thompson are sisters and educators who grew up with a beautiful personal experience of bush culture which shapes identity, culture and worldview. They lead initiatives which focus on creating a school model with a focus in Indigenous education. Pre contact education consisted of observation, sensory experiences and connections to land. The forcible removal of children from families and the land shifted education to focus on conformity and the subsequent traumas children experienced in residential schools had and still has disastrous effects on Indigenous children and families for generations. Modern schools on First Nations still promote colonial standards and amplify colonial voices. There is a movement to integrate Indigenous perspectives across education and incorporate Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing. Land based learning is experiential, holistic, multisensory, multiple intelligences, strengthening identity and building community. This is the centre of Shirley and Florence's education model. Each year in September they take students to a week-long culture camp where they learn traditional teachings, engage in medicine picking, learn canoe safety, moose teachings and more from the many community members who offer skills to the camp. The students connect with Elders and get to be on the land in an outdoor sacred learning area. The land-based connections and approach are ensuring everything is moving forward in a good way.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY AM

1C. Poetry as an Engine of Indigenous Identity

MIKE JOHNSTON


Kris Desjarlais

Mike Johnston is an Indigenous Educator in the Louis Riel School Division, a champion slam poet and the author of multiple educational resource books including You Are Poetry and Teaching is a Tattoo. Mike believes in living joyfully out loud as a radical response to colonization. He described poetry as revolutionary and the practice of putting yourself out there unapologetically is about belonging, not just fitting in. It's an incredibly powerful practice for Indigenous youth to find that connection and belonging. Poetry is sharing identity as flourishing.

"Our identities are part of gift economy. "~ Robin Wall Kimmer

"Our identities are part of gift economy."

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY AM

1D. Indigenous Identity Verification/Fraud – Student Panel

JONAH HARPER, JORY THOMAS-BLANCHARD

Jonah Harper is from St Theresa Point Ansininew First Nation. Jory Thomas-Blanchard (she/her/they/them) is Red River Métis with ties to the settlement of St. Norbert and Oak Lake, Manitoba. Raised highly immersed in Indigenous ceremony, Jory also carries the spirit name Stone Woman and is Bison clan. Both are current students at the University of Manitoba.

Powerful and pointed reflections came out of the questions and discussion on Indigenous Identity, verification and fraud and how it impacts students. Jonah said "the loss of opportunities stemmed more from living in a northern, isolated, and under-resourced community more than Indigenous identity fraud. Indigenous identity fraud takes away more from those who are already in need of opportunities and resources." There was discussion of non-Indigenous professors wishing to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing being and doing into curriculum and the strong need to consult community before engaging in this. Both students talked about how easy it is to self-declare as Indigenous and get away with it. Jory stated, "Indigenous identity fraud should apply more to professors than students because we have seen more instances of non-Indigenous staff receiving large benefits more than non-Indigenous students."

In terms of the process and policies for verification or affirmation that includes students the complexities of identity were exposed.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

Jory talked about the benefit of exploring identity in the post-secondary setting:
"In the Métis community, many people are rediscovering who they are, especially those with a mixed-European background. The university is a good place to explore your identity through classes and student community."

There was a suggestion to give students a grace period, so they have time to explore identity and safely talk about how and why they are still reconnecting.

Jonah mentioned:
"Some people are not well connected to their community or not comfortable reaching out for identity verification from their community. It can be scary to reach out to a community you don't know. Policies for Indigenous identity can put Indigenous students in precarious positions." The 60s Scoop came up and the challenges of consulting survivors without causing further harm. The bottom line was stated by Jonah towards the end of the session:
"We are sovereign nations. We get to decide how we verify our own people."

"We are sovereign nations. We get to decide how we verify our own people."

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY PM

2A. Identity not for sale: Indigenous-led advocacy for curriculum design and facilitation


Kris Desjarlais

Kathleen Wilson(they/she) is a queer 2Spirit educator living in Treaty 1 with their family. Red River Métis by her mother line; family names are Thomas, Parisien, Best with scrip land in St. Andrews. They hold settler ancestry from Spain, Ukraine, Ireland, Scotland and England.

Indigenous educators often get asked to "Indigenize" something whether that be curriculum, methods, programs, spaces, itineraries, etc. Kathleen summarizes this experience as "The Ask". The feeling associated with The Ask is then summarized as "The Pinch" – the fundamental belief that we can Indigenize some things as Indigenous educators, but at the expense of the educator's individual identity as an Indigenous person interwoven with community. To Indigenize something means to put our whole personal selves in it. There are many critiques and potential risks of "Indigenization." Kathleen lists them as Co-optation and Tokenism, Hegemony of Western Structures, Universalizing the Indigenous experience, Erosion of Indigenous autonomy, Neoliberal Use of Indigenization, Cultural Appropriation vs. Cultural Reclamation, and the Fragmentation of Indigenous Resurgence Movements.

Systemic problems need systemic solutions. If educators are being asked to Indigenize but the educator is aware there is not enough change occurring for Indigenous students, it is because there is not enough systemic change yet. One of the barriers is that we host Gatherings like today, and then it dissipates. No actionable plan was solidified.

Breakout Sessions Cont'


Carla Kematch

Shift those boxes in our imaginations, collaborations, and envision what's possible...

THURSDAY PM

2B. Voice as Land-Back: Mapping Our Journey Forwards Through Creative & Collective Practices

MOE CLARK

In Moe Clark's Voice as Land-Back session participants were instructed in interactive practical exercises to see how far their imagination could go and build capacity for the edges of it to grow.

The concepts that were introduced were the importance of stepping outside the box. How can we start to shift those boxes in our imaginations, collaborations, and envision what's possible in the work we are doing? The second concept was Education and teaching as a living process. And finally, the Importance of meeting you here, now. Understanding that we all come with our own biases, challenges. A key reflection was on how these tools could be applied to curriculum development, helping educators bring these concepts into their teaching.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY PM

2C. Empowering Communities Through the Inter-Community Canoe Program

Barney Morin

LAURA PAYNE, BARNEY MORIN

Laura Payne and Barney Morin work with Waterways, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering Indigenous youth and communities through culturally relevant programs. At the heart of their work are week-long day programs, a transformative initiative that blends canoeing skills with cultural teachings to foster leadership, connection, and confidence among participants. Waterways has programs in the Manitoba communities of Miskooseepi (Bloodvein), Wanipigow (Hollow Water), Baaskaandibewiziibing (Brokenhead), Makadewaagamijiwanoonsing (Black River), Miimiiwiziibiing (Berens River), Azaadiwi-ziibiing (Poplar River), Pauingassi (Sandy Narrows), Mishi-baawitigong (Little Grand Rapids), Misipawistik Cree Nation (Grand Rapids), Waywayseecappo First Nation, Skownan First Nation, Lake Manitoba First Nation, and they also listed Manto Sakahigan (God's Lake) as having a program in 2024.

The goal is to get canoes and programming into community. It also includes a land-based language program. Waterways has intro courses as well as canoe tripping prep and their Canoe Racing Prep class helps communities prepare for the Manitoba Indigenous Games. There is an Inter Community Canoe Program and Waterways is building towards overnight trips in the future.

Email is info@waterwayscanada.ca
Website is: https://www.waterwayscanada.com/

Breakout Sessions Cont'

THURSDAY PM

2D. "Indigenizing" Curriculum - Student Panel

KATIE ANDERSON, HEVYN-LEE MARTENS, MEGHAN YOUNG

Katie Anderson was born and raised in Winnipeg and sprouts from mixed roots, with land ties through their paternal side to St. Peters Indian Settlement, Balsam Bay, Norway House, Peguis First Nation, and is a current member of the Manitoba Métis Federation. They also come from Scottish and Dutch lineage through their maternal side. Katie is a current student at the University of Manitoba.

Hevyn-Lee Martens, also known as Bright Butterfly Woman, is a proud 25-year-old Anishinaabekwe from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and the Wolf Clan. Having grown up in the North End of Winnipeg and on her reserve, she's witnessed and experienced firsthand some of the common challenges that many young Indigenous people face— from poverty, mental illness, and substance addiction to limited opportunities for education and cultural connection. Hevyn-Lee is a current student at Red River College Polytech.

Katie Anderson, Hevyn-Lee Martens, Meghan Young

Breakout Sessions Cont'

Meghan Young (she/her) is a Red River Métis woman from Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is Métis through her maternal side with ancestral connections to St. Norbert, St. Vital and St. Boniface, Manitoba. She is currently a land-based educator and graduate at the University of Manitoba.

The panel looked at the concept of "Indigenizing" education in relation to post-secondary programs. They determined the need for more room for culture, access to ceremony, and land-based teachings. The panel discussed the sensitivity needed when dealing with heavy topics like MMIWG2S that may hit close to home for many Indigenous learners. There was caution about teaching about culture and history only related to trauma and not the positives. Students want access to their culture and sometimes face barriers relating to the practical needs of the balance of working and being a student in terms of creating the time and space to do things like Pow Wows and other cultural activities. There are a lot of positives though and a goal to dispel negative stereotypes through the education of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students with a particular mention of newcomer students.

"Students want access to their culture and sometimes face barriers..."

Entertainment

KIND HART SINGERS

We were honored to have Dee, Katelyn and Skyla close the reception with their incredible gifts.

Kind Hart Women Singers is an all Women family singing group that sings songs in the Anishinaabe, Crée, Dakota, Lakota and Oneida languages.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

Albert McLeod

Ivy Chaske

FRIDAY AM

3A. 2Spirit/Indigenous LGBTQI+ Contributions to History, Education, and Scholarship

ALBERT MCLEOD, LLD, IVY CHASKE

Albert McLeod is a Status Indian with ancestry from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and the Metis communities of Cross Lake and Norway House in northern Manitoba. He was a member of the sub-working group that produced the MMIWG - 2SLGBTQQIA+ National Action Plan Report in 2020-2021. In 2020, Albert joined Team Thunderhead, the team that won the international competition to design the 2SLGBTQI+ National Monument in Ottawa.

Albert shared a powerful presentation about the 2Spirit Re-emergence in the 21st Century. He stated that "Colonization doesn't have an end point." and referenced continued resource extraction. In talking about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Albert shed light on the exclusion of 2Spirit peoples and their stories of survival from the process. The 2Spirit name through Myra Laramee from a dream shared with her in 1990. That was the year of the Oka Resistance, after Elijah Harper killed the Meech Lake Accord. Albert shared the stories of the 2Spirit Gathering in that same year and talked about kinship, healing and resources. Here are some of the resource links:
https://2spiritconsultants.ca/
https://twospiritmanitoba.ca/
https://2smichiflocal.ca/

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION GATHERING 2025

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ATTAUSIKUULUTA - Working All Together

MANITOBA COLLABORATIVE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION BLUEPRINT

SAVE THE DATE

VICTORIA INN
WINNIPEG, MB
FEB 5 & 6, 2026

MCIEB GATHERING 2026

KEYNOTE Sessions

FRIDAY AM

3B. Minegoziibe Anishinabe Kina-maaga Gamik - Pine Creek First Nation Learning Hub/Training Centre

TAZ MCKAY

Taz McKay is the Learning Hub Coordinator in Minegoziibe Anishinabe (Pine Creek). He presented on story and progress of Kina Maaga-Gamik, Minegoziibe Anishinabe First Nation's Learning Hub. Kristy Mekish is the Learning Hub Assistant Coordinator and Cindy McKay is a Pine Creek First Nation Councilor overseeing the Education portfolio for the nation. In Pine Creek, Kina Maaga-Gamik builds on Pine Creek's identity through training and education programs. They directly meet the demands of the community and their youth to access education in their home community. Kina Maaga-Gamik is a safe space to take courses while having access to technology, a student lounge, kitchen, laundry room, and a friendly, culturally safe environment. Since opening in 2023, Kina Maaga-Gamik has had 57 graduates across 8 programs.

"... access to technology, a student lounge, kitchen, laundry room, and a friendly, culturally safe environment. economy."

Carla Kematch

KEYNOTE Sessions

FRIDAY AM

3D. Pecha Kucha - GOOSE: Grow Our Own Specialists

MARLENE HEAD

Marlene Head is the Post-Secondary Supervisor for Opaskwayak Education, a branch of Opaskwayak Cree Nation. She is an intergenerational residential school survivor who has overcome many challenges toward her healing journey. Her life experiences inspire her to reach out to others through advocacy, counselling, and support. One of the many ways she has done this began in 2023 with the Opaskwayak Cree Nation GOOSE initiative, Grow Our Own Specialists.

Up to 40% of First Nations students with exceptionalities have been referred for assessment and they don't have the services they need or the clinicians not available. They started their own initiatives through GOOSE To ensure all children and community members with exceptionalities have the support they need.

GOOSE is seeking support, going into communities to identify children with exceptionalities who can benefit from their programs. It's a timely response with Fist Nations members servicing First Nations members.

Currently there are only 2 seats per year for Indigenous students to train in GOOSE and this is an issue. However there has been a successful joint proposal with the University of Manitoba for upcoming funding through the MasterCard Foundation. It has been approved for 1.5 million, over a year and a half to start GOOSE with a focus on junior high and high school students as well as staffing. This will help GOOSE Promote health, science curriculum, STEM camps, and before and after school Programs.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

FRIDAY AM

3D. The benefits of Intergenerational projects!

JEANNIE GURR

Jeannie Gurr is a retired Teacher/ Principal and U of M Faculty of Ed Lecturer. She is currently Prairie Rose School Division School and has worked and lived in the GNWT, Nunavut, First Nations and Metis Communities.

Jeanie spoke of family and Métis community ties. Her community is St. Laurant and is currently the principal at the school there. Intergenerational projects bring people together. The Elders council wants youth involved. Rules and regulations can be limiting to schools, and the projects must have a teacher present to mitigate issues.

Through these projects, Elders have learned to use social media and cell phones to connect with students, made close connections.

As an organizer you know the needs of the community, and the needs of whom you're bringing together, as well as the rules. Jeannie advocates for social prescribing over drug prescribing.

Breakout Sessions Cont'

FRIDAY AM

3D. Kashkikwaata Iii troo (Mending the Gap): Indigiqueering the Curriculum

KATIE ANDERSON, MEGHAN YOUNG, LAUREN HALLETT

Katie Anderson and Meghan Young's bios are above in the "Indigenizing Curriculum" student panel. Lauren Hallett is a Red River Métis student, researcher, and helper. She is from Winnipeg with family ties to Grand Rapids, Bissett, St. Laurent, and beyond. Lauren is in their final year of university and will be receiving their Bachelor of Health Studies with a concentration in Family Health and minor in Indigenous Studies.

The research went through curriculum documents for subjects mandated by Manitoba Education. They were flagged for lack of inclusion efforts throughout the documents. They completed curriculum analysis and began resources for educators.

The goal is to keep kids from falling through the cracks and the work identified 5 main cracks in the Manitoba curriculum. It used the turtle diagram to point out the five gaps– Queer-exclusion, Pan-Indigeneity, Outdated, Inaccessible, and Lack of Diversity.

KEY LESSONS:

- Mending the gap is a continuous effort, more than just one lesson/activity
- The work of seeking out current, reliable sources should not fall solely on teachers
- Foster respectful, trusting and accepting spaces to be open, share feelings, ask questions, and discuss hard topics
- Curriculum should be carefully reviewed and re-written through a decolonial and queer-integrated lens, aiming to close gaps in inclusion and representation
- Community consultation is key, compensate appropriately for time and intergenerational knowledge-sharing
- Be an advocate by calling out racism and queerphobia
- Use gender-neutral language

Breakout Sessions Cont'

There is an urgent need for equitable literacy education for Indigenous students.

FRIDAY AM

?? .Equity Through Structured Literacy: Empowering Indigenous Students

KELLY MILNE, BRITNEY MORRISH

Kelly Milne was born and raised in Selkirk, Manitoba, and the historic Red River Settlement. She brings a rich cultural heritage to her role as an educator. In her current capacity as a Literacy Interventions teacher and Indigenous Education Consultant at Evergreen School Division, Kelly has passionately championed structured literacy practices. Britney Morrish is a dedicated speech-language pathologist deeply passionate about implementing evidence-based practices to foster effective communication and literacy skills. With a focus on evidence-based interventions and structured literacy techniques, Britney is dedicated to supporting educators in empowering individuals to reach their full potential.

There is an urgent need for equitable literacy education for Indigenous students. Evergreen school division approach response to intervention – organizing students through 3 tiers in designating what level instruction students need to have successful literacy. Teachers elect the students as they identify them by their needs. Indigenous students showed measurable success, as well as overall up to 30% increase in literacy levels for the students. Literacy has the power to help students overcome systemic barriers.

Thank you from MCIEB !

We are grateful for an inspiring gathering where educators, students, community patrons, and advocates met to exchange knowledge and cultivate partnerships centered on Indigenous education. Thank you to all who attended for making this gathering a place of connection and dialogue; thank you to all the outstanding speakers and facilitators for sharing your knowledge; thank you to the volunteers who made this event run smoothly; and our deepest thanks to the Elders who shared their knowledge and guidance and ceremony so generously.

THANK YOU!

Steering Committee

SURVEY SAYS!

The following is a brief summary of attendee feedback, which highlights comments that were made multiple times on the post-gathering survey:

THERE WERE MANY POSITIVE OVERALL COMMENTS:

"Incredibly insightful speakers, and relevant topics. Food was incredible, and the connections with community were meaningful."

"The conference was amazing. Looking forward to next year already!"

"It was a beautifully informative and well-run event. The keynotes and workshops/breakout sessions were excellent. The subjects, specifically about identity were thoughtfully presented and timely with so many of our organizations and institutions trying to instill proper protocols and methods of determination, based on teachings and sovereignty."

Overall, how would you rate your experience at the MCIEB Gathering?

Breakout Sessions Cont'

Half of the respondents listed the Elders Ceremony as the most valuable and engaging part of the Gathering:
"Continue offering ceremony and voices of Grandmothers and Grandfathers as well as youth. Gitchi Miigwetch for a beautiful two days!"

"I absolutely loved it and especially the ceremonies. It brought such good energy to the space."
"The elders leading a session like the circle ceremony was an excellent time for people to learn the proper teachings, protocols and in a safe environment."

<u>THE KEYNOTES WERE ALSO TIED FOR POSITIVITY IN THE FEEDBACK:</u>

- Moe Clark was truly inspirational. Discussions with Réal Carrière around identity were a big learning moment for me. Coming to understand the intricacies and complications of claiming Indigenous identities.
- Moe Clark and Réal Carrière were amazing keynote speakers with great insights for consideration.

<u>OTHER FEEDBACK INCLUDED:</u>

- We had multiple respondents give feedback about the venue size – wishing for a bigger space for the volume of attendees.

There were many more helpful suggestions that we will consider as we plan for next year!