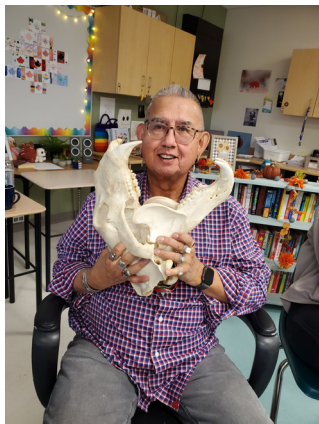


# FEATURE of the WEEK

## Wellness Through an Indigenous Lens

Seine River School Division received \$150,000 through the Provincial Teacher Idea Fund Grant for a project that supports teachers, students, and high school communities in promoting wellness through an Indigenous worldview.



As per part one of the plan, three Elders were invited to work with the division. Elders Eric Flett, Patricia Haberman, and Stan Kipling spend a specific number of days in classrooms and school communities throughout the year. Each Elder brings a unique set of knowledge, gifts, and skills to the students and staff learning.

For the second part of the program, funds are allocated to provide resources and training that support the well-being and learning of teachers.

Part three allocates funding to provide release time for every educator in the building to spend four half-days with different Elders, learning about Indigenous worldviews of wellness, knowing, and being. During the sessions, they discuss various topics, including the Medicine Wheel and the Circle of Courage. They learn how these concepts can guide us toward maintaining balance in our personal and professional lives. Additionally, they explore how the Circle of Courage can support the school community, including students in their pursuit of a healthy and balanced life.

The teaching is always done in a sharing circle for everyone as it is a symbol of respect for the thoughts, stories, and individual histories of each member participating in the circle. The power of the circle provides an opportunity for

everyone's voice to be heard, valued, and respected in the teaching and learning.

Another topic being covered is the seven sacred Grandfather teachings where they learn that living with the sacred laws; Love, Respect, Honesty, Courage, Truth, Wisdom, and Humility, allows you to walk and live in a good way. These teachings offer a special understanding of how we, as people, should live our lives on Mother Earth.

Elder Stan Kipling has offered animal and medicinal plant teachings to teachers and students. This has been a highlight of hands-on, real-world learning to help students understand their connection to nature and its ability to heal and maintain our wellness.



“Part of living a good life is being in a relationship with Mother Earth that is reciprocal. This means that we are connected to all living things and all living things are connected to us. Therefore, we need to take care of

Mother Earth so she can take care of us.” Sandy Rodrigues, SRSD Indigenous Studies Consultant.



This project has highlighted the need to have consistent Indigenous Elder visits in all our schools to continue to support our collective journey of reconciliation and understanding.

HONESTY

EMPATHY

RESPECT

