UNLEARNING

from research to action

St. Albert PUBLIC SCHOOLS

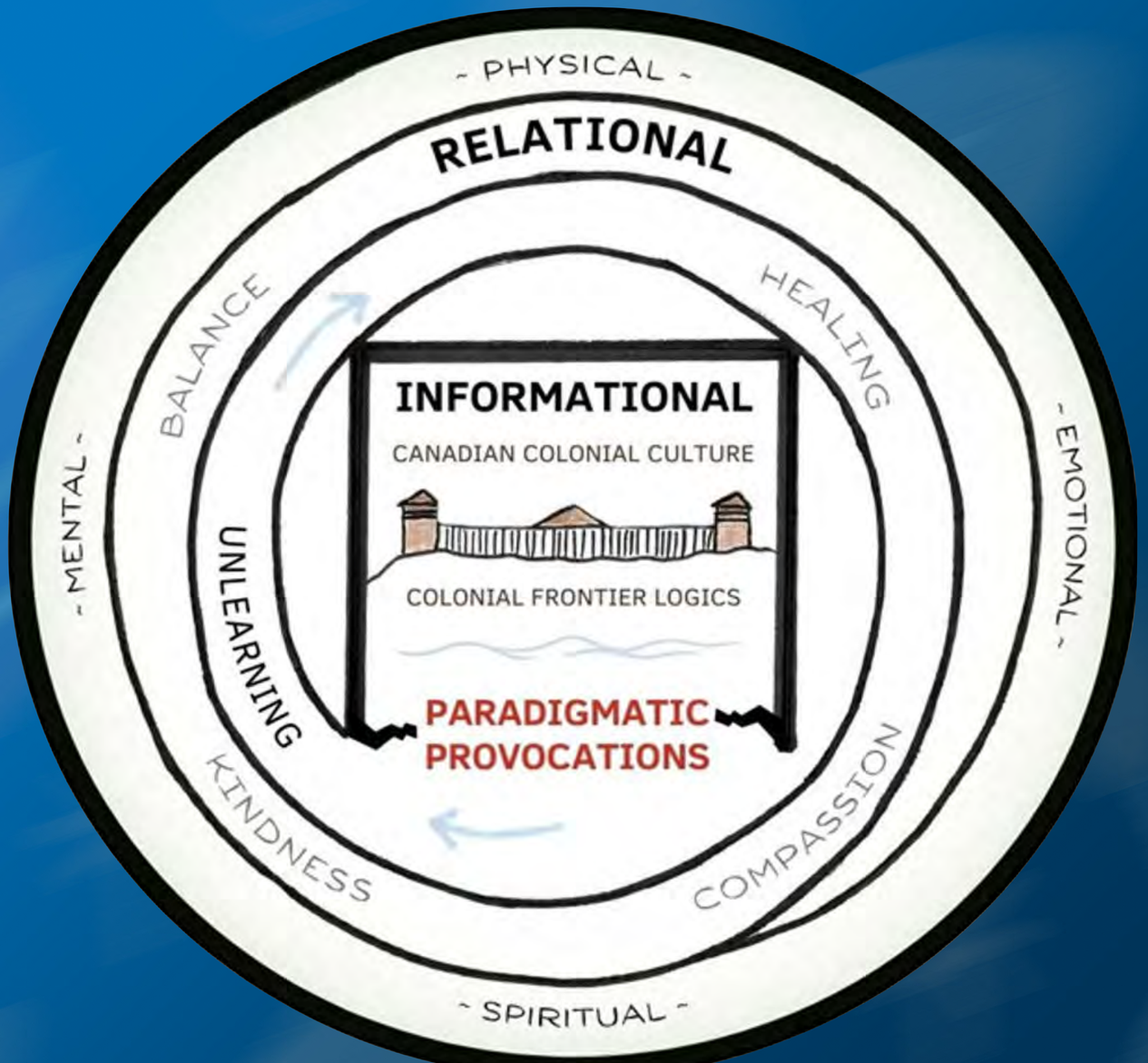
Coloniality of Being

Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day.

Nelson Maldonado-Torres

Creating Conditions for the Emergence of Meaningful Learning

1. *Actively and intentionally preparing and renewing relationships that have been denied*
2. *Connecting people with the gifts that exist in the **place** where they live, work, and study.*
3. *Immersive and sustained knowledge experiments that connect people to wisdom and teachings.*
4. *Transformations in how people experience knowledge, knowing, and how they think of themselves as human beings.*



Created by Solange Lalonde

How do we honour the commitment made when the pipes were present?

miyo wîcêtowin
having good relations

wâhkôhtowin
kinship relations including and beyond human beings

wîtaskêwin
living together on the land

wîtaskê-osihcikêwin
an agreement to live together in peace and harmony

asotamowin
committing, making a vow or a promise

tâpwêwin
speaking the truth

"AS LONG AS THE SUN SHINES, GRASS GROWS, AND THE RIVERS FLOW"




The Treaty Handshake signifies:
ka-miyo wîcêhtoyahk
friendship (to get along well)
ka-wîtaskîhtoyahk
live in peace, side by side, as nations
ka-wîtaskêhtoyahk
for us to live as good neighbours share land
ka-miyo-ohpikihitoyahk
raise each others children well

Reflection

*Based upon what you have heard so far, what initial thoughts do you have about "**unlearning**"? Please consider unlearning from personal and professional points of view.*

Profile



About Us

LARGEST EMPLOYER
in the city of St. Albert
≈ 513 teachers
308 support staff

16 SCHOOLS

3 PRESCHOOL LOCATIONS

≈130 STUDENTS
1958 (inception)

> 9,800 STUDENTS
PRESCHOOL TO GR 12
2025

Programming

supporting the individual needs, abilities and interests of all students

A RANGE OF CHOICES
in our division

Inclusive learning environments that honour and value diversity

PROGRAMS
- English Language
- French Immersion
- International Baccalaureate
- Advanced Placement
- Academic Challenge
- Knowledge and Employability
- Logos Christian
- Cogito
- Hockey, Soccer and Recreation Academies

STUDENTS WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION NEEDS
- range of programming and support services
- regular classrooms and more specialized sites

COMPLIMENTARY PROGARMS
- Career and Technology Studies and Career Pathways
- Fine Arts and Locally Developed Courses

Stories of Practice

What has Unlearning meant to me?





Slowing Down





Relationship



I am of this place,
not above it.

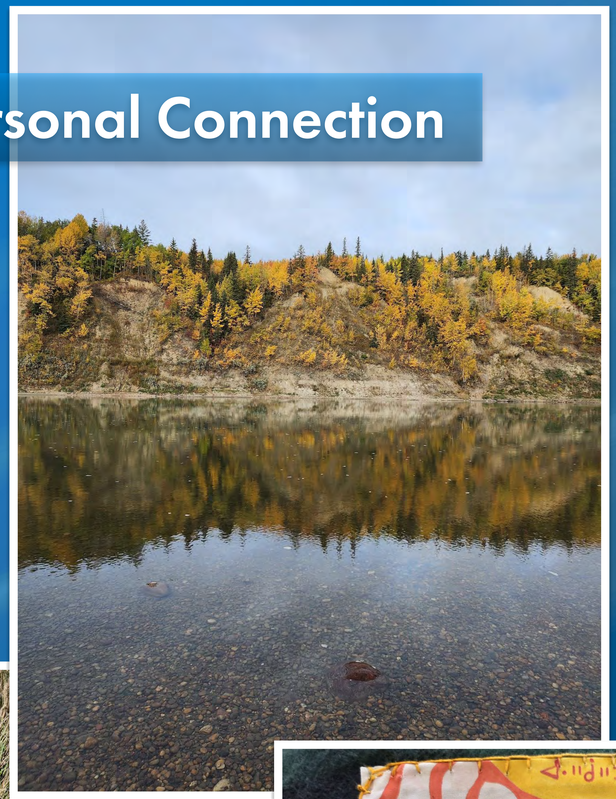


Land is NOT just a setting
It is a teacher and friend

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Personal Connection





Sharing Learning with Others







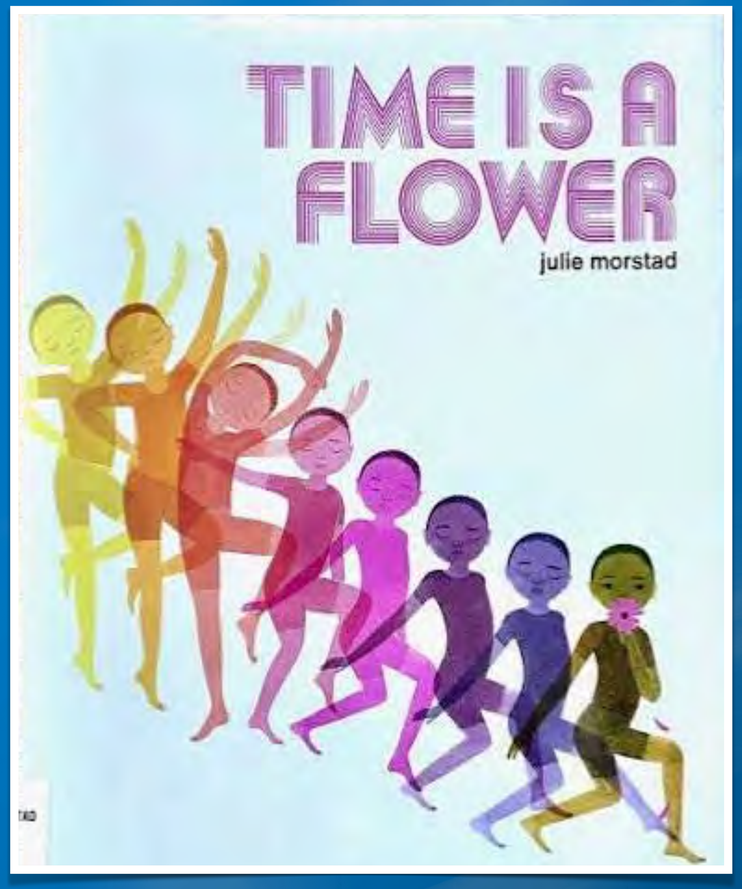
Lived Experiences

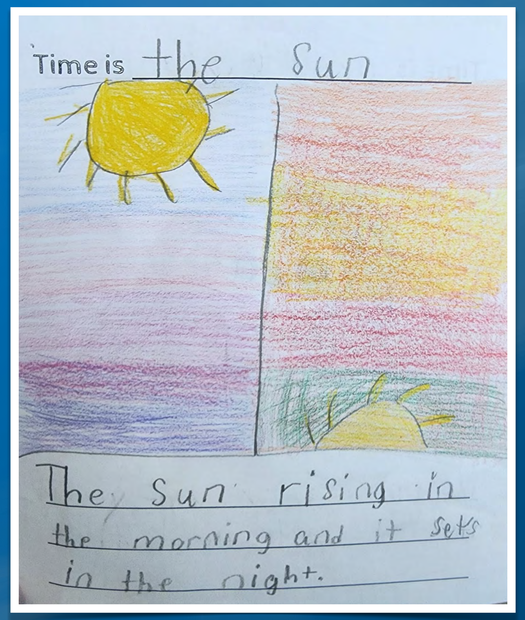


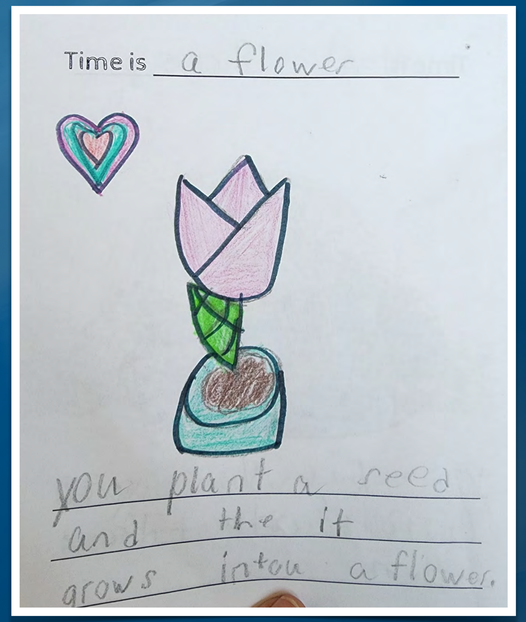
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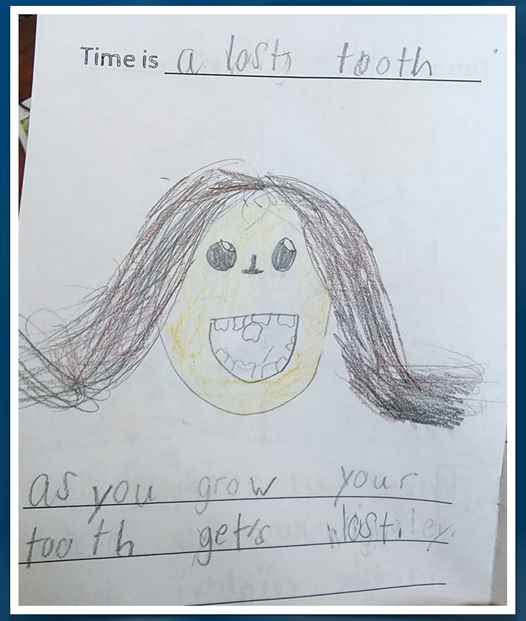
It began with a question intended to disrupt my thinking...

Are there other "valid" ways of keeping time?









At first, I started with what was familiar...

...Then started to extend to what was less familiar.

What can we learn about time by observing the land?

Are there other ways of knowing that we can explore?

Learning about the 13 nêhiyaw Grandmother Moons Starting Our Own "Happy Place" Study.









Learning from the Land





Learning with Students



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Building Connection and Relationship with Land





Noticing





Visiting our “Happy Place” Each New Moon

Working on our Seasonal Rounds throughout the year











Sharing our similarities
Honouring our uniqueness

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What is Unlearning to me?

Unlearning is a confluence of experience and reflection that challenges what I thought I knew

- building of learning from many different professionals
- experiencing culture as both a guest and participant
- sitting in the discomfort that despite no ill intent, I have caused harm
- I have a personal and professional responsibility to this work



Unlearning in Planning

- a willingness to give up control (process as well as product)
- taking a risk in regards to not knowing exactly how something will come to an end
- being willing to try something new
- a shift in thought from the teacher directs to “we’re going to figure this out together”
- engaging in sustained learning over the course of the whole year, moving away from “one and done”





Unlearning in My practice

Place Study Variations

- **Year 1**
  Learning from (not just on) the land, using the nehiyawak moon teachings
- **Year 2**
  How can we understand wahkohtowin and wawetinahk through regular visits to the ravine?







Letting Kids Lead









Reflection

*What **spoke to you** (personally and professionally) about unlearning from these stories of practice?*

Unlearning Is...

- ***A fundamental repositioning***
- ***Acknowledging and questioning***
- ***Experiential***
  - *Am I the Imposter?*
  - *An invitation to challenge*
  - *Holding space*



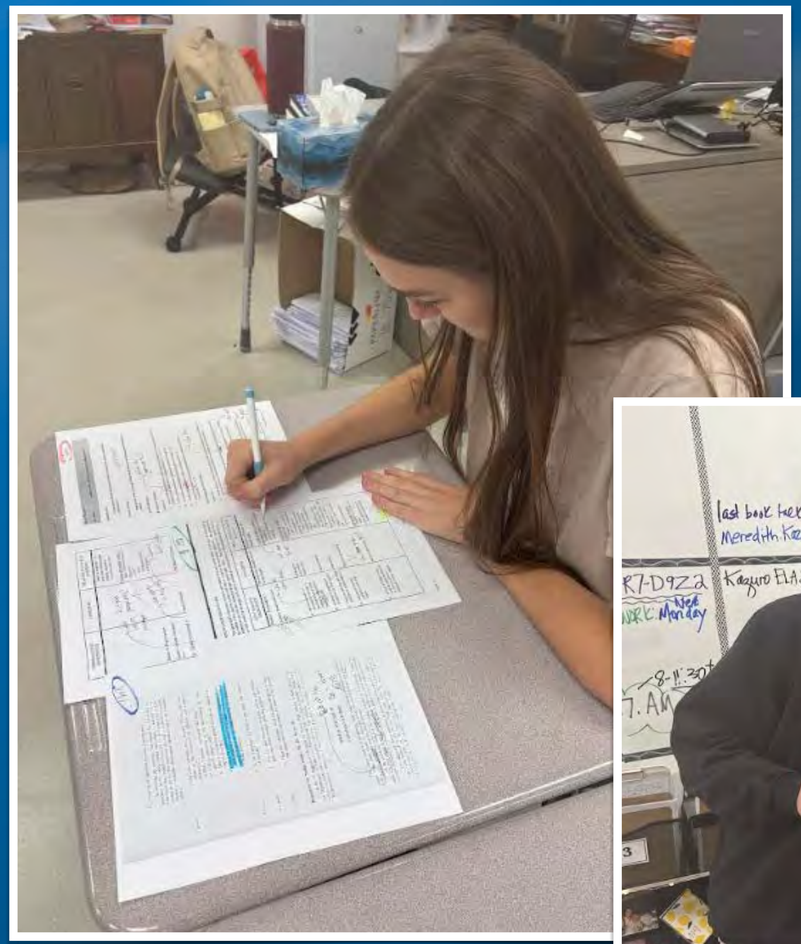
Informing Practice

Unlearning, as I see it, is not a replacing of pedagogical "best practice" but rather an accompanying paradigm that allows educators to flip to the best pedagogical approach for the given circumstances.

Changes

In my school, we are in the beginning stages.

- Feedback: a tangible starting point is an "exposure to" before an "adoption of"
- What this has looked like for us
  - Social Studies and juxtaposing curriculum.
  - Resources – Cree language dictionaries
  - Experimenting with outdoor walking department meetings
  - Keen math teachers—Less about content changes and more about delivery
  - Understanding that not everything needs to be assessed.





Teacher/Colleague-Facing

I truly believe that there is no other profession that reflects ***who you are as a person*** *as much as teaching.*

If this whole profession is based on relational connection, it only makes sense that when you change as an educator, how you engage with students and colleagues changes as well.

This is one of the Tricky Parts...

Asking someone to honestly evaluate their lens and their teaching practice, in many instances, feels akin to asking them to reexamine aspects of their identity.

Challenges

Some colleagues are open to unfamiliar ideas.

Others are resistant.

Even eager teachers harbour some concerns:

- Receiving anonymous complaints
- Being viewed a providing an "ideological advantage"
- "Am I going to do the wrong things?"
- "Am I accidentally engaging in cultural appropriation?"
- Time
- Student diploma exam preparation

Unlearning, Relationship, and the Possibilities of Learning

My role
connecting Indigenous perspectives with curriculum and classroom learning

My starting point
learning through a colonial education system

My journey
reconnecting with culture and rethinking learning

From Experience to Understanding

The Unlearning Project has invited me to look beyond the activity

Experience
What did we participate in?

Intention
Why does this experience matter?

Reflection
What are we noticing, questioning or reconsidering?

What changes when we consider these as part of learning itself?

Relationship is Not an Event

Relationship Takes Time













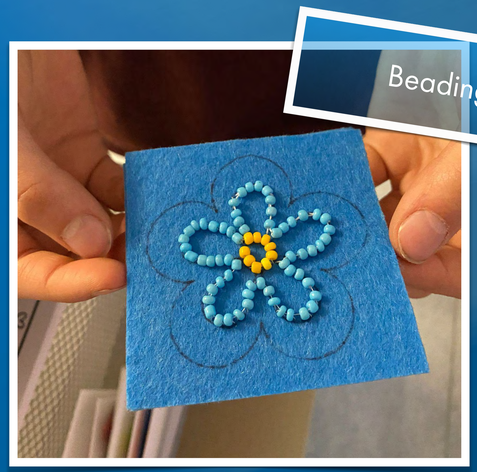
The learning extends beyond a single lesson

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Experience With Intention

Experiential Learning is More Than Doing











Experience With Intention

Experiential Learning is More Than Doing









Entering the Land as a Relative

Learning Through Relationship With Place



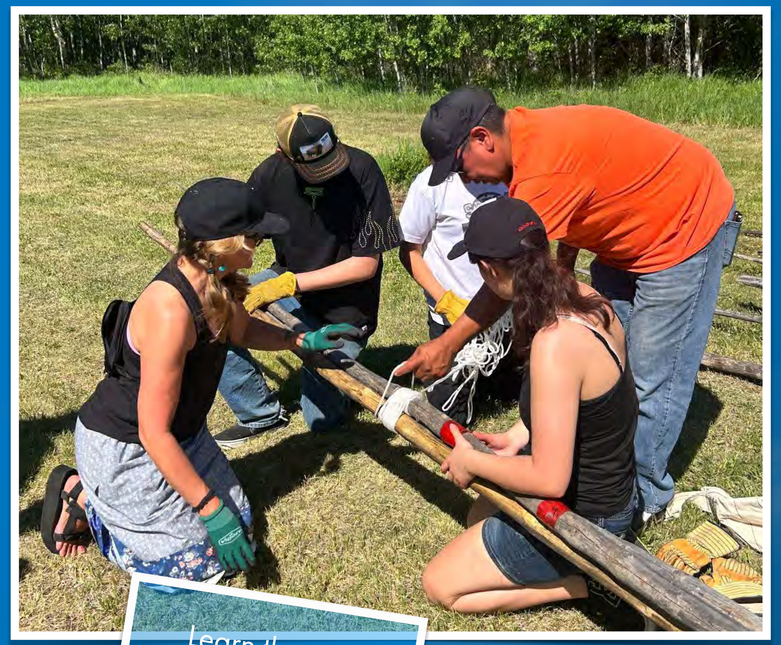






What Happens When We Disrupt The Boundaries?

Connecting Traditional Knowledge With Contemporary Skills



Learn through observation and participation



Thinking spatially and practically



Working Collaboratively



Recognizing multiple ways of knowing and doing

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What becomes possible when we stop deciding in advance where learning belongs?

Curriculum is Full of Possibilities

Indigenous Education doesn't have to be "one more thing"

How might Indigenous ways of knowing and being deepen what we already teach?



CALM Class
Beading
Focus, patience, creativity, reflection



YOGA
Métis Dot Art
Slowing down, being present, self-regulation



OUTDOOR PURSUITS
Medicinal Plants
Responsibility and Reciprocity

What is Changing in My Practice?

Rethinking what learning can look like and what makes it possible



RELATIONSHIP
Not simply a connection around learning, but part of learning itself



LAND
Not just a setting, but a source of knowledge and relationship

CURRICULUM
Not simply a list to complete, but a space of possibility





REFLECTION
Not just an ending, but part of the learning process

What I Carry Forward

Unlearning is not about replacing one way of knowing with another.

It is about becoming open to seeing what we could not see before.

RELATIONSHIP · LAND · EXPERIENCE · REFLECTION

These are not extras
They are part of **how we learn**

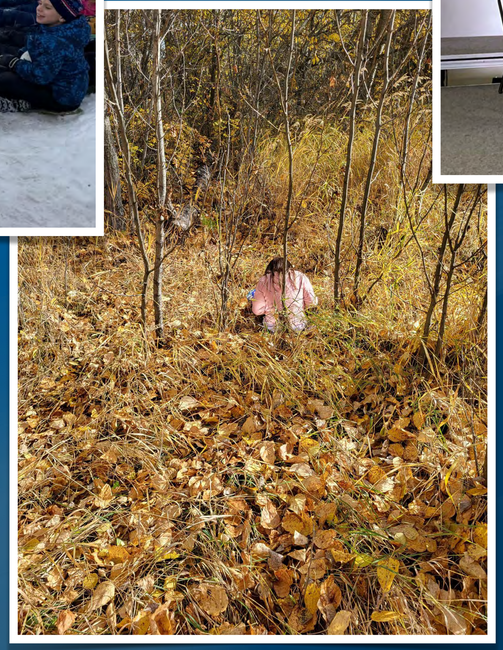
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Leveraging and Creating Conditions—Division Initiatives







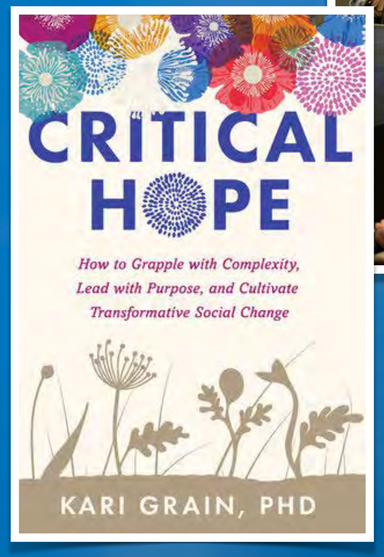




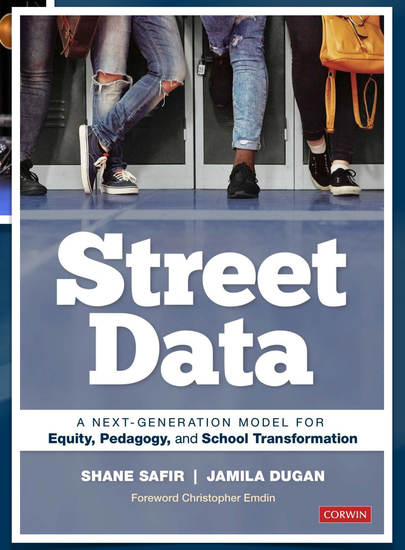
Leveraging and Creating Conditions—Professional Learning











Leveraging and Creating Conditions

Public Engagement & Policy

- Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, Inclusive and Safe learning & Working Environments
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Anti-racism
- Supporting Reconciliation and First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students' Success





The longer-term vision for reconciliation and First Nations, Métis and Inuit education includes schools where First Nations, Métis and Inuit identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing and knowledge systems flourish.



Leveraging and Creating Conditions

Public Engagement & Policy

I feel like my success as a Métis student could be strengthened by learning more about the beauty in my culture instead of focusing on the bad

Indigenous Student Survey







More training for teachers, more consistent training for all staff members about how to address racism in the classroom. Need to understand what is and isn't okay

Student Sharing Circle

Our Purpose

Equity is our process.

Excellence is our goal.

Our Principles

Diversity is a fact

We are all diverse.
We honour diversity.

Inclusion is a commitment

We act to value, respect, and empower others every day.
We champion inclusion.

Belonging is a feeling

Each person has the right to be accepted as their authentic selves.
We cultivate belonging.

Pedagogy is a catalyst

We grow in our learning when we connect, explore, and take risks.
We leverage pedagogy.

Disruption is an imperative

We challenge singular views, experiences, and stories.
We nurture disruption.

Accountability is a responsibility

We hold each other responsible for our shared commitments.
We embrace accountability.

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Our Practices

Elevate
Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being in All Spaces

Champion
Equity by Challenging Systemic Biases and Dismantling Barriers

Amplify
Responsive Instruction and Assessment

Leverage
Innovative and Experiential Learning

Prioritize
Literacy and Numeracy Skills

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Reflection

What possibilities from what we shared do you imagine from your context?
Please consider personal and professional points of view.

Thank You!

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