

LLRC FULL CIRCLE 2020

Denegódhé asíe ghanjł'eth ha beghonít'a

mamāhtawimihtānihk ki-toskayāmināwahk

Empowering Our Youth



Kavia Burns

My name is Kavia Burns. I am a Nehiyaw Iskwew from Treaty Six Territory, most specifically Sturgeon Lake First Nation Saskatchewan. I have been an educator for twenty six (26) years in various roles: teacher, literacy/numeracy catalyst, student services teacher, social-emotional resource teacher, and assistant principal. I hold a Bachelor Degree in Education *with Distinction* (1993); Post Graduate Certificate in Special Education (2006); and a Master's Degree in Education Administration (2018). I worked in various First Nations Schools and briefly with a provincial school. I am presently working in Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, *kihiw wāciston School*, as a student services teacher. I enjoy learning with the children through an experiential approach with the utilization of land based learning as a means of teaching Indigenous knowledge.

Land as Textbook: Learning for Students with Special Gifts

This presentation takes an Indigenous perspective of land based learning for students who have special gifts, not special needs. The Western view of children with special needs are seen as a deficit, disorder, or disability. In the Indigenous worldview, children who were special were seen as holding special gifts and powers which were given from the Creator. The children with special gifts will be reintroduced back to the ancestral lands, nature's classroom, where they can learn Indigenous ways of knowing and the land's connection with the Cree culture and language. When teaching children with special gifts, we begin from Elders' stories and experiences. Then take the children onto the land and discover the stories through experiential learning and spiritual connection. The teachings through an Indigenous lens needs to happen first, so that children with special gifts may understand through their entire being while learning curricular outcomes.

I come to offer my learnings from Elders, the land, and how that may be tied to a cross curricular approach and Personal Program Plans (PPPs). I want to show the process of how that framework for learning is developed and planned. Students will learn the outcomes for literacy, technological literacy, math, science, social studies, and the arts while experiencing their own language and culture through land based learning and Elders' teachings.

Land, Language, Relationships and Culture