

Aboriginal mentor teachers will work with you to incorporate indigenous teachings into your classroom.

Working together to meet the goals of our Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement will benefit all children and ultimately lead to better success for our Aboriginal learners. The following teachers will share their experience and knowledge by working with you in your professional development journey for Aboriginal Education.

MPSD Aboriginal Mentor Teachers

A joint project with Siwal Si'wes, MTU
and BCTF



Our Forefathers' teachings – Siwal Si'wes

To work with an Aboriginal Mentor Teacher please contact District Principal Carolynn Schmor at 604 826 3103. Release time of up to one day will be available as funds permit.

Vivian Searwar

Vivian is Status Cree Indian and is a member of Muskoday First Nation (Saskatchewan). She has been teaching since 1991 and in the Mission School District since 1999. She has experience teaching Kindergarten and Grade Four/Five. She is responsible for spearheading the introduction of the novel *Fatty Legs* to the district which was instrumental in raising awareness of Indian Residential Schools. In 2014, she and Judy Cathers organized and directed the drama production "Little Bear's Vision Quest" which was well attended including district staff and First Nations elders of the community. Vivian has always had a strong connection to her Aboriginal roots. She incorporates storytelling throughout her curriculum and advocates serendipitous inquiry-based learning experiences. Vivian is currently teaching Grade 4 French Immersion at Christine Morrison Elementary.



Lyn O'Grady

Lyn has taught grades K-8 and has integrated Aboriginal culture through yoga, drama, creating student's own legends, novel studies, literacy and social studies. She believes in co-creating, co-reflecting and co-problem solving as she facilitates the student's learning about Aboriginal culture. She is passionate about continued learning and teaching of Aboriginal culture locally, nationally and globally. Lyn has been involved with the Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network for many years and has much experience with learning through inquiry. Lyn is currently teaching at Hatzic Middle Secondary School.



Joanne Davis

Joanne has taught across all grade levels within both elementary and secondary schools here in Canada and in the United States. Where ever she has lived and worked she has challenged herself to incorporate multicultural and indigenous knowledge as an integral component of her learning environment. Knowledge and understanding within her classroom continues to be enriched as she and her students explore new ways of thinking and learning. She comes with a particular interest in cross curricular projects at all grade levels. The students have built long houses (amazing reading rooms), dog sleds, ice floes, created original string stories, etc. As she continues her own learning journey she hopes to incorporate more place based learning with a particular focus on math concepts. She has a strong grounding in Art so she is willing to help tackle the difficult conceptual problem. She currently teaches at West Heights Community School.



Ann Titford

Ann is the Siwal Si'wes Teacher Librarian. She is trained as a high school English teacher and teacher librarian. Through her 22 years with MPSD 75, she has taught elementary library prep, grade 6/7, grade 8/9 Humanities, and cooperatively planned and taught with elementary and high school teachers in her role as teacher librarian. From 1992, when she first moved to BC from NL, she has explored the rich culture of aboriginal peoples locally and through her travels all over North America. She is quite pleased to be in her current assignment, and to be learning more about local aboriginal culture, language and ways of learning. Her focus for mentoring will be Literature Circles for grades 4 to 9. She currently works at Mission Central in the library.



Tianay deAndrade



While promoting and respecting the traditional territory of the Stó:lō People, I will help foster an awareness and respect for Aboriginal people. My indigenous philosophy is a part of who I am. My teaching involves looking the whole child and honoring our unique ways of knowing. The curriculum is what we teach, but not how we teach it. I feel like I can express my own culture through a lens of teaching that students will appreciate. The community is very important to me as I feel that it takes a community to raise a child. As Naxaxalhts'i Sonny McHalsie shares in his article, We must take care. I feel like as a teacher, we must take care in all that we do. We are seen as role models and we bring a good attitude and always teach from the heart. I have grown up with my Mom & my family modeling the concept to "do things with a good heart and a good mind" and I plan to bring this each day to my place of learning with my students. I welcome the opportunity to share my personal knowledge and culture to enhance our students' learning. Tianay is currently teaching at Fraserview Learning Center.

Jennifer Goodwin



Jennifer has 14 years teaching experience. She has taught mostly grades 6 and 7 with some experience at grade 5 and would like to mentor grades 4-9 for all subject areas. She has been gradually adding Aboriginal content where it naturally fits with topics her class has been studying or if it ties into getting to know her students. Her passion for Aboriginal content has developed as result of many of the students and families she has become familiar with over the years. She believes we have students who are wondering just as Joseph Boyden did when he described his learning experiences as one in which he was always thinking and saying to himself, "Look at me... listen to me... I am important... I matter and I have a story too! I am here. I exist. And my journey is important." Incorporating Aboriginal culture, history and traditions into our curriculum can not only help our students better understand themselves but develop an understanding of the greater community surrounding them and help break down barriers and stereotypes. Jennifer is currently teaching at Heritage Park Middle Secondary School.

Deborah Urano



Deborah has been involved with the Aboriginal Department at her schools for over eight years. She was the Aboriginal Academic Support Teacher at Heritage Park and Hatzic Secondary and then as a teacher volunteer and supporter. Fostering two First Nation's children gave her reason to question her own history when her oldest son asked, "Mom what kind of Indian are you?" After examining her heritage she discovered that her maternal grandfather is Metis, from Winnipeg, Manitoba and her father's great-great grandfather was an Iowa First Nation's man. Deborah is passionate about First Nation's literature and is excited to begin to create inquiry based novel studies focusing on Aboriginal issues that exist today as the result of colonization and Residential school. She firmly believes that it is through stories that the voice of the Aboriginal people will be heard. Deborah wants to help Mission students realize the true history of our Canadian Aboriginal people and once their stories are heard, healing can continue. Deborah is currently teaching at Mission Middle Secondary School.