



**First Nation Advisory Committee  
Thursday, April 30, 2020 1:00 p.m.  
Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Present:**

**Trustees**

Judy Manitowabi – Committee Chair  
Linda Jamieson

**Administration**

Anna Marie Bitonti, Director of Education  
Paula Mann, Superintendent of Education  
Sue Wardell, Principal Our Lady of Fatima  
Stacey Malette, Principal Our Lady of Sorrows  
Derek Belanger, Principal St. Joseph-Scollard Hall  
Audrey Gribbons, Principal St. Alexander  
Samantha Andrusiek, English Catholic Curriculum Coordinator  
Lorraine Sutherland, Indigenous Graduation Coach  
Jody Weller, Superintendent of Education

**Regrets**

Nancy Allaire, Nipissing First Nation  
Kathy Fortin, North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre

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**1. Call to Order**

Judy Manitowabi called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

**2. Prayer**

Judy Manitowabi led the committee in prayer, acknowledged the traditional land and Treaty territory and welcomed our Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic (NPSC) Indigenous Graduation Coach, Lorraine Sutherland.

**3. Agenda/Minutes**

a) Approval of Agenda

- i. The agenda was amended to add item #7, OCSTA First Nation Advisory Group update on Truth and Reconciliation.

b) Approval of Minutes

- i. The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, October 28, 2019 were approved as presented.

#### 4. NPSC Indigenous Education Initiatives Update:

##### a) Indigenous Grad Coach

Jody Weller updated committee from last FNAC fall meeting and introduced Lorraine Sutherland as NPSC's Indigenous Graduation Coach.  
NPSC Indigenous Graduation Coach Presentation: Summary of Supporting Indigenous Students February 2020 – present.

Lorraine began her presentation by sharing an introduction in Cree and a summary of her background from Attiwapiskat First Nation. In her introduction, Lorraine shared that she is pleased to be part of our NPSC team. Despite the brief amount of time she has had with students in a face-to-face manner, Lorraine has developed a close connection to the St Joseph-Scollard Hall (SJSH) community and is now in the process of connecting with elementary students/families. Due to Covid-19, modifications to her timelines have occurred.

Lorraine shared updates in the following areas, which reflect a summary of progress to date:

##### **Building Relationships with St. Joseph - Scollard Hall**

Building relationships with students and building trust is a key priority for Lorraine. She is familiar with the SJSH community as her own children attended. She is beginning to understand the various roles, including her own. She has met with various staff, for example, the student success teacher and the NSL teacher, where they were able to share information that is important to know in supporting our Indigenous students. Lorraine has also been meeting with students and families, with the help from the referrals of staff and connecting with these students and families in different ways.

##### **Working with Community Partners**

Lorraine immediately reached out to community IFC - Children and Wellness support worker, and as a result, began setting up appointments to re-engage students. Lorraine noted that making connections with students and families takes time and varies with family circumstances. She continues to be flexible to navigate through this, especially during the school closure period.

##### **Working with NPSC Student Support Services team (Mental Health and Well-Being)**

Lorraine continues to collectively monitor the needs for meeting directly with students and has been supporting the SJSH Wellness Hub, where appropriate. She also has been able to participate in the Student Support Services team meetings.

##### **Providing Well-Being Supports to Students in a Culturally Responsive Manner**

Lorraine continues to help students understand the connection among cultural teachings and the curriculum. She is also building her own understanding of how concepts are taught through the curriculum and providing individualized support to students where they may be struggling with curriculum content.

Lorraine has also been working with SJSH Guidance department to assist them with their understanding of applying for post-secondary sponsorship and is currently developing processes and resources and support in this area. Lorraine also attended the AES symposium, which was an enjoyable experience and provided perspective on AES and how the education systems can work together.

### **Networking with Indigenous Graduation Coaches**

Lorraine reached out to the Keewatin Patricia School Board to connect with one of their Indigenous Graduation Coaches, as they were a pilot board. In doing so, Lorraine gathered many tips and considerations to assist her in the role. She also participated in the Indigenous Graduation Coach Ministry meeting, where she was able to make network connections and listen to different ideas shared by boards.

### **Supports for Indigenous Students Families**

Lorraine was in the process of setting up tutoring for students with Nipissing University, so plans will resume once school closure period ends. She highlighted that land-based learning opportunities for some students during this period is paramount to their own families and well-being. In these cases, some students may not be connected to EDSBY and there is flexibility for this.

Lorraine has since created her own EDSBY pages to share support and cultural teachings and sacred practices. She also prepared medicine bundles and smudging bags and has offered these to families.

In working with Eileen Berwick, Experiential Learning Special Assignment Teacher from the Curriculum Team, Lorraine has helped to create a resource to support story and reflection. She is also working on a needs assessment, supporting interventions, and monitoring impact. Some emerging themes include: student identity, self esteem, pathways, motivation, initiative, and self advocacy. By analysing EQAO, attendance, and report card/credit accumulation data Lorraine will be able to determine gaps in service and how to incorporate transition plans and student support plans moving forward.

At the conclusion of Lorraine's presentation, Judy Manitowabi thanked Lorraine for sharing the depth and breadth of her ongoing work.

#### **b) Board Action Plan**

Jody Weller reviewed the submitted NPSC Board Action Plan and highlighted several key areas, including: cultural spaces being created and enhanced, student engagement initiatives including Makwa Dodem, intentional and focused planning, and scheduling events; while promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity that support all students in the school. Other areas supportive of engaging students include the inclusion of Equity Representatives on Student Councils, and ensuring that faith and culture are embedded into school activities and events. We continue to engage in many partnerships throughout the community and we are well supported with Nipissing First Nation.

The Ministry indicated timelines for Board Action Plans have been adjusted due to the closure period, and that any unspent funds from 2019-20 school year can be carried over into the following year; however, many of our board's funding for priorities has been spent, and we are finding creative ways to continue to support priorities and maintain momentum. For example, we are looking at a possible virtual junior student retreat in June.

**5) Ministry of Education Update**

Indigenous Education Office of the Ministry held a teleconference on April 16, 2020. Details were shared regarding virtual meetings to support the curriculum enhancements to Indigenous Studies courses for grades 9 through 12.

An Indigenous Grad Coach Ministry teleconference was held on April 21, 2020. At this time it was confirmed that the funding for the positions will continue for the 2020-21 school year, with the likelihood that funding will eventually be incorporated in the GSNs. The meeting gave an opportunity to share best practices and challenges with underlying themes of well-being, mental health, food security and housing security being the most crucial and common concerns.

**6) AES Update**

Regional

Jody Weller shared a summary from the October regional meeting, which included projects and curriculum areas of focus supporting FN communities and developing ways to share these resources. Updates in Language and Culture, Special Education, and the Niigan Proposals were also shared. The AES regional meetings offer an opportunity to collaborate with First Nations.

Provincial

Board representatives Jody Weller and Lorraine Sutherland attended along with the team from Nipissing First Nation. This gathering allowed for time to plan and network. Keynote speaker, Dr. Sean Lessard, highlighted the need for school systems to think outside the box when meeting the needs of students. The three main overall areas of focus for the gathering included: cultural competency, special education, and student transitions.

**7) OCSTA Truth and Reconciliation Update**

Judy Manitowabi participated in the OCSTA First Nation Advisory Council's Truth and Reconciliation discussion, which ended with a round table. A report will be circulated with FNAC once available.

**8) Next Meeting**

Dates will be circulated for the end of June 2020.

**9) Adjournment**

Judy Manitowabi adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.