

Celebrating Mi'kmaq History Month year-round

by Amanda O'Regan-Marchand and Pamela Langille, Executive Staff Officers, Professional Learning

October is here and bringing with it the beautiful colours of fall and so very much to embrace in our learning spaces!

As a brief update, your PL team is busy facilitating workshops, both virtually and in person; connecting with our pre-service teachers through their B.Ed. programs and partners with the EECD to provide input on behalf of our members moving forward.

This month, we are celebrating Mi'kmaq History Month and our giveaways are centered around different lenses of creating awareness and inspiring learning as we continue on our journey towards reconciliation.

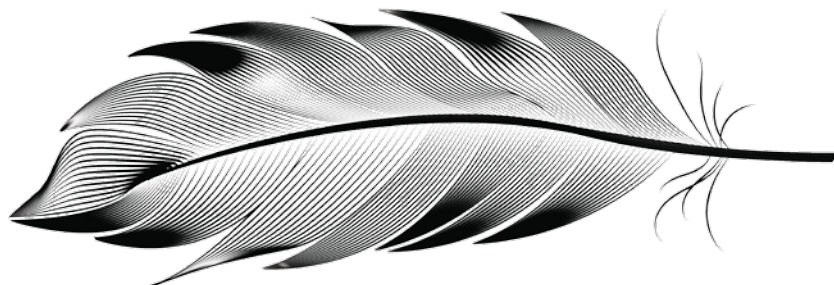
The self-care journal was created by a Nova Scotia author, Mrs. Katie Pellerin. It offers an opportunity for us to make time to check in with ourselves each day and reflect on how we are being and doing. Each month, self-care will be included across our Professional Learning offerings in workshops, in articles and giveaways because it is a process that is so very important for your own wellness and we need to practice it, like any other skill, for it to continue and grow.

The story *The Eagle Feather* offers an opportunity to incorporate Indigenous history and tradition across the curriculum. Sharing this resource in your learning space could inspire any number of different cultural connections, including the opportunity for a sharing circle of the different traditions that come together in your class family.

Borders is a graphic novel illustrated by Natasha Donovan adapted from a story by Thomas King. It recounts a residential school experience of a young boy and his mother and details their struggles as they search for belonging and reconnection with their identity. This resource could also be incorporated across the curriculum to inspire meaningful reflection and sharing.

As we move through this month of learning and leading, let us reflect on the history and strong traditions of our Indigenous peoples. From there, we can explore and practice new ways of relating to our colleagues, our students and

building relationships with members of our Indigenous communities. May aligning with this new understanding inspire you to keep reaching towards to new learning throughout the year.



Here are some possible suggestions:

September: Incorporating the seven sacred teachings into your classroom structure for expectations and ways of connecting with one another: Respect, Wisdom, Love, Bravery, Humility, Honesty and Truth;

October: Sharing history and tradition of our culture and ways of knowing and being;

November: Remembering and honouring our histories by connecting with community elders;

December: Celebrations and traditions, including crafting and giving;

January: Indigenous teachings from the land and changing seasons;

February: Indigenous traditions around caring for one another and kindness-connecting to the sacred teachings of respect and love;

March: Mi'kmaq musical traditions-the history and importance of the drum in the Mi'kmaq tradition; learn about the honour song; the meaning of its lyrics and where and how it is to be shared with audiences;

April: Mi'kmaq teaching and tradition around new beginnings as spring arrives;

May: The medicine wheel and Indigenous ways of healing; invite a medicine keeper to visit your class and possibly make medicine pouches;

June: Indigenous learning about transitions and moving forward to our next chapter; The story of the Eagle feather for graduating students; Investigate the possibility of partnering with your local Mi'kmaq community to incorporate traditions into your graduation ceremonies;

We hope that these ideas will help you to incorporate Indigenous teachings in your learnings spaces all year round.

Wela'liog,

Your Professional Learning team

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