

Board salutes school trip

By Nicholas Donaldson
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"A Day of Learning" trip to Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung by Riverview and McCrosson-Tovell students got the nod for the Rainy River District School Board's monthly recognition of excellence for October.

The recognition took place at the board's regular monthly meeting held last Tuesday at Rainy River High School, with a report on last February's trip given to trustees by principal Kendall Olsen.

"Our day at [the] Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historic Centre provided rich opportunities for experiential learning; learning that has the potential to last a lifetime," the report read.

The day trip was a combination of outdoor and First Nations' education as the students visited the visitors' centre, storytelling area, cultural display areas, roundhouse, ski and snowshoe trails, fire pits, and the trapper's tent.

During the day, students learned about the importance of trapping to the local economy, reservations and settlement along the Rainy River, Turtle Island legends, and First Nations' art, among other things.

It was noted in the report that the type of instruction varied throughout the day, switching between hands-on and experiential learning to listening,

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asking questions, and answering questions.

Instructors from several organizations came together to teach the students, making the day a collaborative effort.

These included Tara Allan and other Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung staff members, Jason Jones (RRDSB), Robert Horton (Seven Generations Education Institute), Brian Love (Ontario Trappers' Association), and Elvis Adams (a Big Island F.N. artist).

"At the end of the day, we knew that it was an incredible day of learning not only because we could observe the results, but also because students reported about what they learned," Olsen's report stated.

The students took risks, learned new skills, solved problems, and created works of art.

"Students reported that they had a greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of trapping, a better understanding of how our district was settled, and an understanding of how Turtle Island came to be," Olsen added.

"In the process, students reported having a great deal of fun and a very memorable experience."

Also at last Tuesday's meeting, trustees:

- heard about RRHS teacher Guy Arpin and his 25 years of service and contributions to the school community for the employee recognition;

- listened to a report on the 2016-17 EQAO testing results;

- confirmed the minutes of two special board meetings;

- re-appointed Daryl Ellis as an external member of the Audit Committee for a three-year term ending Dec. 31, 2020, as recommended by the Audit Committee;

- approved the following policies: 7.85 (Student Safety) and 1.41 (Trustee Expenses);

- received a Joint Health and Safety report from Plant Operations and Maintenance manager Travis Enge; and

- listened to an update from Director of Education Heather Campbell on the Annual Operational Plan focusing on a "Culture of Lifelong Learning."



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