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# REPORT

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## **Recognition of Excellence**

***Alternative Secondary School Program  
United Native Friendship Centre***



## RAINY RIVER DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### United Native Friendship Centre Alternative Secondary School Program

**Date:** December 1, 2015  
**To:** Trustees  
**From:** Peg Keffer  
Principal, Fort Frances High School

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the report be received for information only.

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#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Rainy River District School Board Strategic Plan speaks to the emotional well-being of all students as the foundation for their academic achievement. As such, the United Native Friendship Centre Alternative Secondary School Program provides an innovative, locally developed program that assists students in personalizing their learning so they can achieve their goals, including graduating with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

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#### CONTEXT

Each year, approximately 1,000 students attend the 11 publicly funded Alternative Secondary School Programs in Friendship Centres in Ontario. Based on the principle that every student is unique, the Alternative Secondary School Program is geared to meet students' individual needs.

The Alternative Secondary School Program in Fort Frances is a partnership between the United Native Friendship Centre, Fort Frances High School and the Rainy River District School Board. Funding is supported by the Ministry of Education. The United Native Friendship Centre/Fort Frances High School Program for at-risk students and adult learners has established itself locally and provincially for its support of student achievement, well-being and outstanding graduation success.

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#### SUMMARY

The United Native Friendship Centre program is unique in the partnership with Fort Frances High School and the Rainy River District School Board in that it allows students to access a number of supports to achieve academic success. The mission of the Alternative Secondary School Program is to create a comfortable and educational environment that is sensitive to the needs of its students. Staffed with two classroom teachers and one Alternative Secondary School Program Coordinator, students receive education, guidance and counselling services, healthy meals, and cultural teachings. In this culture-based setting, the Alternative Secondary School Program offers students the opportunity to learn in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. The program is based on individual, independent learning courses that students can complete at their own pace, with the option of additional tutoring, should the student require this service.

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As the Alternative Secondary School Program is a satellite of Fort Frances High School, an array of courses are available, providing students with expanded program opportunities and a choice for students to re-enter the mainstream program.

Over the past 12 years, the Secondary School Program at the United Native Friendship Centre has continued to experience increased enrolment, with 30 full time students at present and approximately 55 independent study students. Last year, 24 students and their families celebrated their success at graduation and feast. Furthermore, out of the 11 Friendship Centres in the province, the Fort Frances United Native Friendship Centre Alternative Secondary School Program has demonstrated the greatest number of graduates, in the in the last 3 years.

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