

Piitoayis Family School at Colonel Walker School

Parent Meeting

March 5, 2015



**Calgary Board
of Education**

Agenda

1. Welcome Prayer
2. Pizza Dinner (in lunchroom)
3. Background
4. Accommodation Planning
5. Table Discussions
6. Next Steps

Introductions

Elder, Randy Bottle

Michelle Ranger, Principal Piitoayis Family School

Stephanie Jones, Assistant Principal Piitoayis Family School

Lori Pritchard, Supervisor Learning Services

Calvin Davies, Director Area IV

Jason Arrell, System Assistant Principal Area IV

Darlene Unruh, Director Planning & Transportation

Lori Taylor, System Assistant Principal Planning & Transportation

Background Information

Aboriginal Learning Centre

Background Information

Timeline of Events

2012-present

- Elder Advisory Meeting where Elder Leonard Bastien shared we need a “Beautiful Place”
- Conversations with families, CBE staff, Alberta Government, community members and Elders (these conversations continue today)
- Engagement of Aboriginal community stakeholders, planning for formal conversations
- Intent of Aboriginal Learning Centre is to provide a wraparound approach to learning and a place for the Aboriginal community to learn about and celebrate Aboriginal cultures and languages
- H.W. Riley School in the community of Dover has been identified as a location
- A pipe ceremony was held on the land

Aboriginal Learning is...

- holistic
- a lifelong process
- experiential in nature
- rooted in Aboriginal languages and cultures
- spiritually oriented
- a communal activity, involving family, community & Elders
- an integration of Aboriginal and Western knowledge

~ Canadian Council on Learning (2007,p.5):*Redefining how Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning.*

http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/Redefining_How_Success_Is_Measured_EN.pdf

Community Dreams

- As we create this "*beautiful place*" for the Aboriginal community to come together, what dreams and ideas do you have for this place (physical, mental, spiritual, emotional)?
- What needs to be in this place to support the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being of your children, yourself, and your community?



Community Dreams

A place...

- of our own, not sharing with another school community
- for learning (a modern facility)
- to learn from the land
- with an emphasis on early learning
- for family/community gatherings
- cultural ceremonies

The Aboriginal Learning Centre will...

- support Aboriginal learners between the ages of 3 – 8 and their families
- be a place for high quality learning focused on a holistic learning model:
 - **mental:** indoor/outdoor classrooms, culture, language
 - **physical:** gymnasium, after-school programs
 - **emotional:** community services
 - **spiritual:** Elders, celebrations, ceremonies
- support learning for “ALL” – Circle of Nations Learning Collection

Design: Cultural Attributes

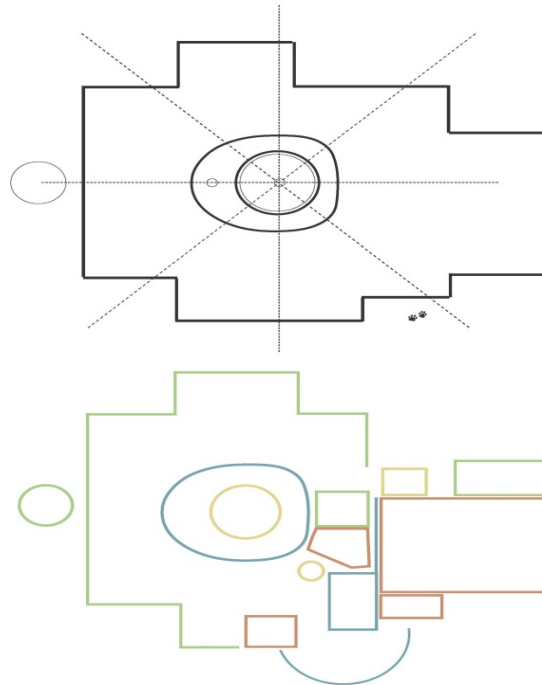


THE GOAL

The goal is to create a culturally-responsive learning centre for First Nations, Metis and Inuit students in Calgary. The design had to align with the school's teaching style, celebrate the achievements of FNMI people, be inclusive to multiple nations and their worldviews, and support a holistic educational perspective.

THE PROCESS

We brought together members of the Calgary Aboriginal community for a Visioning & Design Charette. We focused on three priorities. First we confirmed and prioritized a list of values based on the Medicine Wheel quadrants: mental, emotional, spiritual, physical. Second, we discussed ways to honor and represent the diverse cultures within Calgary. Finally, we discussed traditional methods of learning and how this could inform the school's design.



INTEGRATING KEY ATTRIBUTES OF ABORIGINAL LEARNING

- We learned that knowledge is based on the **interconnection** of humans, animals, plants, the environment and the Creator. We responded with a number of design strategies including: the turtle, the elements (earth, air, water and fire), sun paths (equinox/solstice) cardinal directions, and the seven grandfather teachings.
- We understand learning is **holistic**, engaging all aspects of the individual (emotional, physical, spiritual and mental) and beyond, to encompass the family and community. Parental involvement was critical, as were Elders, community partners and the teachings afforded by community-wide cultural activities such as pow wows, round dances and feasts. *ALC Highlights: Family & Elders Room, Community Partners Office, Wellness Centre & Gathering Space.*
- We understand learning is **experiential** or connected to lived experience. Learning occurs by observation and imitation, and requires spaces for activities such as story telling, ceremony, food preparation and sharing circles. *ALC Highlights: Central Gathering, Ceremony Room, Community Kitchen.*
- We learned that **sharing** past events as well as current accomplishments was important. *ALC Highlights: Story Walls for student achievements, display of artifacts and history, and celebration of the diversity of First Nation, Metis and Inuit heritage.*
- Finally, we learned that a **blend** of Western and Aboriginal knowledge is viewed as the key to success: merging the knowledge and technologies of Euro-Canadian society with culturally-based traditions and ways of knowing. *ALC Highlights: Cultural Teaching Room, Learning Commons and Small Group Rooms.*

Source: "Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Learning" by CC/CCA (Canadian Council on Learning)



Turtle Island

The turtle represents the homeland (North America) or Earth to many Native Americans. There are many versions of the original creation story which speaks of Mother Earth and Sky Woman being carried on the back of a giant turtle.



The Elements

Water represents renewal and nurturing of all life. Earth is viewed as our mother Planet (Mother Earth), supporting all physical life forms. Air is the enabler of life, breath, language and song. Fire is the source of all light (sun, stars, flame) and energy.



Equinox / Solstice

Tracking solstice and equinox provided meaning and survival for many Native Americans. These astronomical occurrences would mark important ceremonies, celebrations and rituals, including events that predicated survival such as food harvesting and storage.



Cardinal Directions

The four directions are part of the Medicine Wheel teachings. Each direction corresponds with an Element (air, earth, water and fire), a quadrant of self (Mental, Physical, Emotional and Spiritual) and stages in the lifelong learning process.



Seven Grandfather Teachings

Teachings for many Aboriginal cultures are based on values, many of which are represented by animals. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are: Truth (turtle) Respect (buffalo) Love (eagle) Humility (wolf) Honesty (human) Courage (bear) Wisdom (beaver)



ABORIGINAL LEARNING CENTRE FOR CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The LeBlond Partnership Architects + Planners

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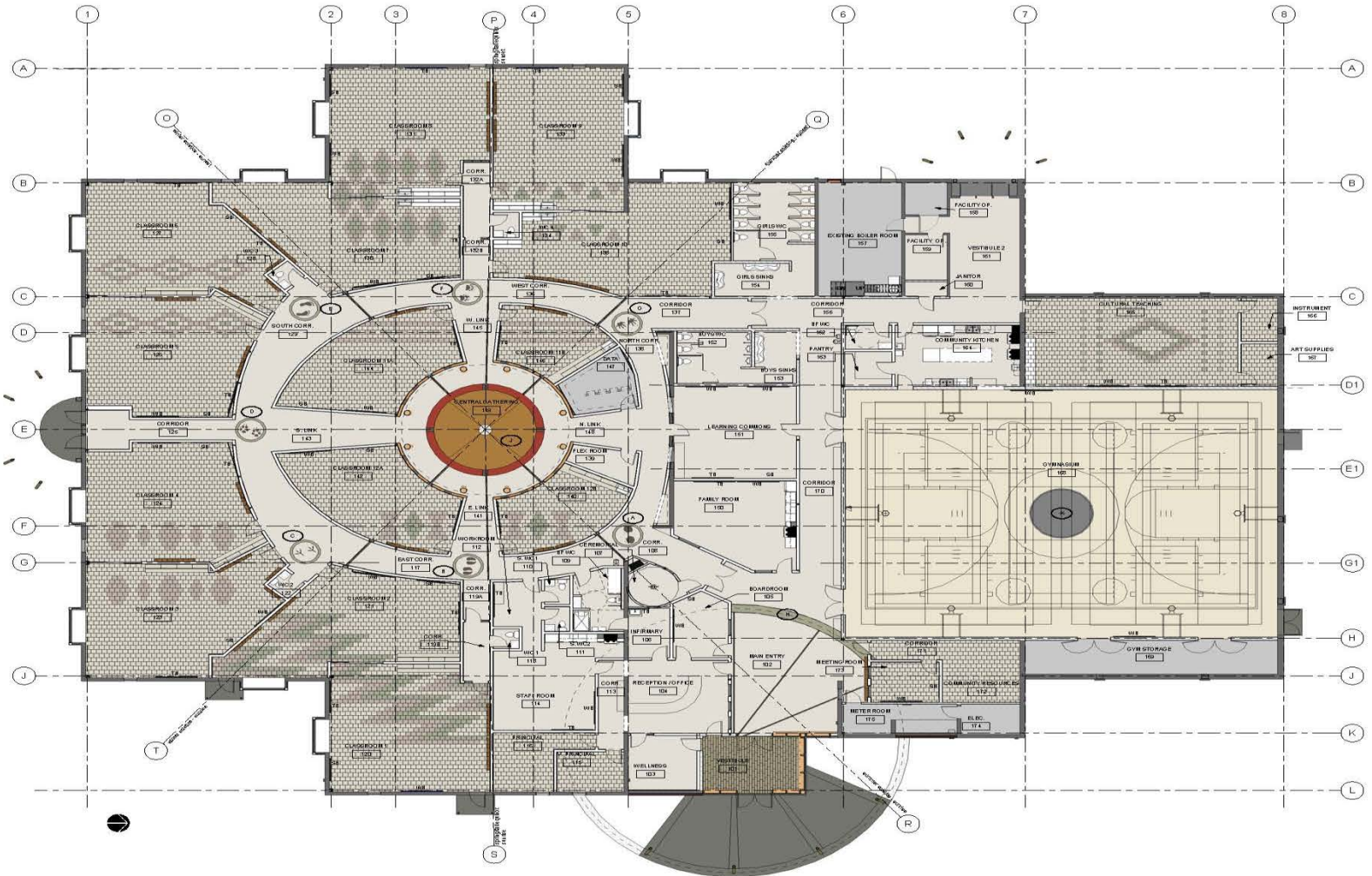


SEPT 17, 2014

Design: Entrance



Design: Floor Plan



Design: Gathering Space



What do we know?

- We know that for the 2016-17 school year, K-2 students from Piitoayis Family School will move together to the Aboriginal Learning Centre.
- This means that for the 2016-17 school year, Piitoayis Family School will no longer offer Kindergarten to Grade 3.
- Enrolment at Piitoayis Family School will decline in 2016 when the Aboriginal Learning Centre opens.

Timeline

November 6 and 20, 2013

Initial Stakeholder Meeting

January 13, 2014

Creating the ALC Update

January 21, 2014

Funding Update

May 18, 2014

Design Charrette

June 18, 2014

Public Open House

September 17, 2014

Public Open House

February 25, 2015

Public Open House

March 5, 2015

Initial parent meeting
regarding the future of
Piitoayis Family School

Consult

Our goal is to *consult* with you by obtaining your feedback on:

- What do we need to pay attention to as we transition students from Piitoayis
 - Students moving to the ALC
 - Division II students

By *consult*, we mean that

- We will keep you and other identified stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input was used to influence the final decision.

Scope of influence

Your input may influence

- Transition planning

We will continue to provide you with opportunities to offer feedback throughout this engagement process.

Decision Making

Any decisions regarding consideration of closure of programs and/or schools will be made by the Board of Trustees upon a recommendation from the Area Director and, the Director of Planning & Transportation.

Although parent input can influence and impact final decisions, parents are not empowered to decide the final outcome.

Projected School enrolment

Year	K	GR1	GR2	GR3	GR4	GR5	GR6	Total
2015	29	27	20	16	22	10	17	141
2016				20	16	21	10	67
2017					20	16	21	57
2018						20	16	36
2019							20	20

Your Input

Today we would like you to consider the way forward when looking at the future of Piitoayis Family School and the opportunities and challenges that are presented by the opening of the Aboriginal Learning Centre (ALC) in 2016.

- What does this mean for the Grades 4-6 program at Piitoayis Family School? What are the possibilities?
- What does this mean for our Piitoayis students transitioning to other schools? How can we best support them?
- What is the best way to engage our families?
- What questions are on your mind?

Table Conversations

- Each person's feedback is important.
- We would like you to hear as many view points as possible. It is essential for us to hear the feedback you have and the reasons that support your thoughts
- As you listen to the viewpoints of those at your table you will be able to reflect on opportunities and challenges, respond thoughtfully and offer suggestions.

Process

Each table will have 30 minutes of discussion time.

- Introduce yourselves
- Michelle Ranger & Stephanie Jones will facilitate and take notes regarding the conversation
- CBE representatives will be circulating to answer clarifying questions

Feedback

The feedback that you provide will assist CBE Administration make informed decisions regarding the enrolment concerns regarding Piitoayis Family School after the Aboriginal Learning Centre opens.

Share your thoughts

yourvoice@cbe.ab.ca – always available

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Piitoayisfeedback> - open
from March 5-March 20

What's Next

- review feedback from tonight's discussions
- gather further feedback via Survey Monkey
- provide updates via the school principal

| thanks |



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