

MAMÀHTAWISIWIN

The Wonder We Are Born With

Tools for Reflection, Planning, and Reporting

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Mamàhtawisiwin : the wonder we are born with — tools for reflection, planning, and reporting

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This resource is available on the Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning website at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iid/index.html>.

Disponible en français.

Available in alternate formats upon request.

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Advisory Councils

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning appreciates the contributions of the following advisory councils:

Indigenous Inclusion Directorate Advisory Council
Kiskentamowin Indigenous Advisory Council

We recognize that Manitoba is on Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak, and Nehethowuk Peoples. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

Introduction

Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With—An Indigenous Education Policy Framework represents the provincial policy directive and conceptual framework to inform and guide Manitoba along the path to an Indigenous-inclusive education system. The four mutually supportive strategies identified for Mamàhtawisiwin are

- authentic involvement
- putting students at the centre
- understanding world views, values, identities, traditions, and contemporary lifestyles
- inclusive and culturally safe learning environment

Aligned with each of these strategies are specific actions that provide guidance for all educational partners/stakeholders by describing what an Indigenous-inclusive education system could look like in Manitoba educational settings. If the learning environment has the conditions described in *Mamàhtawisiwin* that reflect an Indigenous-inclusive setting, this will lead to improved well-being, academic success, and educational attainment for Indigenous students.

In order to support the implementation of *Mamàhtawisiwin*, two tools for reflection, planning, and reporting have been developed that address the actions described in the document. One tool is for use at the classroom and school level and the other is for use at the school division/district level. Each is intended to be a tool for reflection and planning, as well as a vehicle for reporting on progress toward an Indigenous-inclusive education system.

Mamàhtawisiwin School Division/ District Tool for Reflection, Planning, and Reporting

School division/district leadership—including, but not limited to, superintendents, assistant superintendents, and school board members—will come together to assess the progress their school division/district has made toward exemplifying an inclusive school community. This assessment will help to identify priority areas for funding, professional learning, and policy development, as well as provide a vehicle for reporting school division/district progress toward an Indigenous-inclusive education system.



Authentic Involvement

- Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.
- Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family involvement.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
Elders and Knowledge Keepers are rarely visible at school division/district events and few Indigenous families are in attendance. Community protocols are yet to be understood or followed.	The importance of the participation of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and families at school division/district events is beginning to be understood. Attention is being paid to reaching out to Elders and Knowledge Keepers.	The importance of the participation of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and families at school division/district events is understood, as is the importance of community protocols. Elders and Knowledge Keepers are often participants, and attempts are being made to include community protocols.	Elders and Knowledge Keepers and families are integral participants in school division/district events and celebrations. Community protocols are understood and followed.
Budgets do not specifically include funding for Elder and Knowledge Keeper honoraria.	Funding for Elder and Knowledge Keeper honoraria is included in budgets for some special events.	Budgets include honoraria for Elder and Knowledge Keeper participation at some, but not all, levels of the system.	Budgets include honoraria for Elder and Knowledge Keeper participation at all levels of the system.
Communication with parents and families in the school division/district is sporadic, with little attention paid to clarity. Parents and families are not yet asked to provide feedback.	Communication with parents and families is more regular and some attention is paid to addressing clarity. Parents and families are rarely asked to provide feedback.	Parents and families receive clear and regular communication from the school division/district. They are sometimes invited to provide feedback on certain issues.	Parents and families receive clear and regular communication from the school division/district. Parents and families are regularly invited to provide their feedback, which is taken into account in decision making.
Indigenous representation is not yet evident in school division/district leadership or on the school board.	Indigenous representation in school division/district leadership or on the school board is limited.	Senior school division/district leadership or the school board includes Indigenous representation.	Senior school division/district leadership and the school board both include Indigenous representation.



Putting Students at the Centre

- Respect and listen to students.
- Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
While the school division/district leadership holds high expectations for all students, this message is rarely articulated.	The school division/district leadership holds high expectations for all students, and this message is sometimes conveyed, often verbally.	The school division/district leadership holds high expectations for all students, and this message is sometimes conveyed, verbally and in written communication.	The school division/district leadership not only holds high expectations for all students, but also clearly and regularly conveys this message using multiple communication vehicles, including through school division/district policy.
Ideas and supports (funding, professional learning opportunities) are not specifically targeted to the importance of high expectations and how this is translated into practice.	Ideas and supports (funding, professional learning opportunities) to increase understanding of the importance of high expectations are sometimes available to educators.	Ideas and supports (funding, professional learning opportunities) to increase understanding of the importance of high expectations are available to educators in different forms.	Ideas and supports (funding, professional learning opportunities) are available to educators to learn how the value of high expectations is translated into practice.
While the school division/district leadership welcomes students when they interact with them, there is no mechanism for Indigenous students to have a voice in school division/district planning and decision making.	The school division/district leadership welcomes Indigenous students, and there are occasional school division/district events or consultations that provide opportunity for student voices.	The school division/district leadership welcomes Indigenous students, and there are regular school division/district events or consultations that provide opportunity for student voices.	The school division/district leadership models are welcoming to all students. They ensure that Indigenous students have a voice in school division/district planning and decision making through deliberate and systematic structures and processes.
While the importance of transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options) is understood, few, if any, specifically allocated resources are available.	The importance of transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options) is understood, and some specifically allocated resources are available, but not for all transition points.	The importance of transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options) is understood, and specifically allocated resources are more widely available, but not for all transition points.	Resources are specifically allocated to support students and families at critical transition points (e.g., entry into school, transition between levels, transition between school and post-school options). These resources are regularly reviewed and their impact evaluated.



Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles

- Teach true history.
- Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
Resources for professional learning about the true history of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children are included in general professional learning budgets, not specifically allocated. School division/district leaders do not prioritize their own participation.	Resources for professional learning about the true history of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children are included in general professional learning budgets, not specifically allocated, except in the case of special events. School division/district leaders participate in some of these learning opportunities.	Resources are allocated for professional learning for all educators regarding the true history of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children. School division/district leaders sometimes model participation in these learning opportunities.	Resources are allocated for professional learning for all educators regarding the true history of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of intergenerational trauma on families and children. School division/district leaders model participation in many of these learning opportunities.
School division/district leaders are beginning to express a willingness to learn about their own origin stories and their own biases.	School division/district leaders are engaging in opportunities to learn about their own origin stories and their own biases.	School division/district leaders seek out and engage in opportunities to learn more about their own origin stories and their own biases, and share how these affect them.	Not only do school division/district leaders understand their own origin stories and take ownership of their own biases, they also model this through their words and actions.
No specific resources are allocated for educators to incorporate Indigenous languages in schools and classrooms. The school division/district has not yet considered the use of Indigenous languages in their communications.	Specific resources are sometimes provided for educators to incorporate Indigenous languages in schools and classrooms. The school division/district is considering the use of Indigenous languages in their communications.	Resources are available to educators so that Indigenous languages are present in schools and classrooms. The school division/district is beginning to use Indigenous languages in communication with families and community.	Resources are available to educators so that Indigenous languages can be present in schools and classrooms. The school division/district models use of Indigenous languages in communication with families and community.
While Elders and Knowledge Keepers may attend school division/district events, they are rarely asked to share their teachings.	Elders and Knowledge Keepers regularly attend school division/district events and are asked to share their teachings.	Elders and Knowledge Keepers regularly share their teachings at school division/district events.	Elders and Knowledge Keepers share their teachings at all school division/district events. School division/district leadership knows what knowledge the Elders carry, and Elders know what is expected of them.



Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment

- Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.
- Value and celebrate differences.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
School division/district leaders have not yet taken the opportunity to learn about the world views, values, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in their school division/district. They may not know who they are.	School division/district leaders engage in some opportunities to learn about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples they know are in their school division/district.	School division/district leaders continually engage in opportunities to learn about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples they know are in their school division/district.	School division/district leaders prioritize and continue to learn, in a variety of ways, about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples they know are in their division/ district, understanding and valuing their diversity.
No specific resources are allocated for educators to learn about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples in their school community.	Resources are allocated for educators to learn about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples in their school community. These are often funded as special events.	Resources are allocated either divisionally or in school budgets to provide professional learning for all educators about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples in their school community.	Resources are allocated divisionally and in school budgets to provide professional learning for all educators and educational assistants about the world views, values, and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples in their school community.
Indigenous community values are not yet reflected in written or verbal communication with families and community. Notices of Indigenous events may appear on the school division/district website, but this is sporadic.	Indigenous community values are sometimes reflected in written or verbal communication with families and community. Notices of Indigenous events often appear on the school division/district website.	Indigenous community values are often reflected in written and verbal communication with families and community. Notices of Indigenous community events are included on the school division/district website as a matter of practice.	Indigenous community values are reflected in written and verbal communication with families and community. Indigenous community events are highlighted on the school division/district website.
The physical environment of school division/district buildings may reflect some of the diversity of communities in the division/ district, but reflection of Indigenous cultures is rare.	The physical environment of school division/district buildings reflects the diversity of communities in the school division/district, and some attention is paid to the inclusion of Indigenous cultures.	The physical environment of school division/district buildings reflects the diversity of communities in the school division/district. Regular and deliberate attention is paid to the inclusion of Indigenous cultures.	The physical environment of school division/district buildings reflects the diversity of communities in the school division/district. Indigenous cultures are featured.

Authentic Involvement

- Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.
- Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family involvement.



Reflections

Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.

Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family involvement.

Putting Students at the Centre

- Respect and listen to students.
- Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.



Reflections

Respect and listen to students.	Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.



Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles

- Teach true history.
- Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.

Reflections

Teach true history.

Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.



Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment

- Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.
- Value and celebrate differences.

Reflections

Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.	Value and celebrate differences.

Mamàhtawisiwin School Tool for Reflection, Planning, and Reporting

School staff—including teachers, school leadership, and those in support roles—together with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, students, and community members will assess the progress their school has made toward exemplifying an inclusive school community. This may be done in small groups and/or as a whole staff. The tool offers an opportunity for reflection and discussion, which also helps schools identify priority areas for professional learning. As well, the tool provides a framework for reporting school progress toward an Indigenous-inclusive school community.

Example of a Reflection Process for Schools

- An introduction to *Mamàhtawisiwin* is provided to staff, perhaps at the first staff meeting of the year.
- Staff take a few minutes to identify what is currently in place to support an Indigenous-inclusive school community.
- Staff are given the link to the *Mamàhtawisiwin* document, as well as to the school-level tool.
- Staff members are asked to reflect on the tool in relation to their own practice.

- A session or sessions are held with students, during which they can reflect on aspects relevant to them.
- At a staff meeting or professional learning day, staff, together with Elders and community members, are put into small groups to share their thoughts on the school's progress in each of the four mutually supportive strategy areas.
- After sharing their perspectives, a constructive discussion will focus on any divergent opinions and why those might exist.
- The discussions should also identify areas of strength and areas where more growth is desirable. In the latter case, professional learning opportunities may be warranted.
- The reflection process should be repeated later in the school year to reflect on and celebrate areas of progress and to identify priorities for continued growth.

The tools are meant to be used in positive ways to support individual and group reflection and celebrate progress toward an Indigenous-inclusive education system that will foster Indigenous student success.



Authentic Involvement

- Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.
- Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family involvement.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
While there have been some attempts to reach out, engagement with Elders and Knowledge Keepers is limited. They often do not feel comfortable when they do come into the school.	Engagement with Elders and Knowledge Keepers is evident at school events and occasionally in the classroom. They may not feel comfortable in the school, but greater attention is being paid to reaching out to them.	Engagement with Elders and Knowledge Keepers is always evident at school events and frequently in the classroom, but usually just in the Early Years. They feel more comfortable in the school, but they do not always know exactly what is expected of them.	Engagement with Elders and Knowledge Keepers is an expected and frequent occurrence in classrooms at all levels. They feel comfortable in the school. Educators know what knowledge the Elders carry, and Elders know what is expected of them.
While some connections are made with Indigenous parents, these are sporadic, not systematic. Indigenous parents are not engaged on Parent Councils, and there is no equivalent or alternative structure.	There is more evidence of parental involvement than the involvement of extended family members. Indigenous parents have some voice on Parent Councils. There is no equivalent or alternative structure.	The involvement of families, as well as extended family members, is easily visible. Indigenous parents have a voice on Parent Councils, although there is no equivalent or alternative structure.	The engagement with families, including extended family members, is very visible and considered part of the fabric of the school, including in daily learning activities. Indigenous parents are an integral part of Parent Councils or have an equivalent structure for their voices.
While there is some initial recognition that the engagement of families, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members is beneficial, many do not yet see these benefits.	While there is growing recognition of the benefits of engaging families, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members, some do not yet see these benefits.	There is widespread recognition of the importance of the engagement of families, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members.	The importance of families, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members is unquestioned.
While a few efforts are being made to learn about how to engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, families, and community members, these are infrequent.	While efforts are being made to learn how to engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, families, and community members, these remain sporadic.	Ongoing attention is paid to learning how to engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and families, including extended family members, and community members.	Attention is paid to continuous learning about how to engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and families, including extended family members, and community members.

Putting Students at the Centre



- Respect and listen to students.
- Employ a holistic approach to supporting students.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
While students are treated respectfully, there are few opportunities for them to share their lived experiences, knowledge, gifts, and strengths. They do not see themselves reflected in the school environment.	Students are treated respectfully, and there are some opportunities, usually in non-core curricular areas, for them to share their lived experiences, knowledge, gifts, and strengths. They sometimes see themselves reflected in the school environment.	Students are treated respectfully, and there are opportunities, including in core curricular areas, for them to share their lived experiences, knowledge, gifts, and strengths. They see themselves reflected in their school environment.	Students are treated respectfully and are celebrated and valued for their individual and collective identity, which is reflected in their school environment. They have regular and multiple opportunities to share their lived experiences, knowledge, gifts, and strengths.
Students seldom, if ever, have input into the pace of their learning and choice of learning modality.	Students sometimes have input into the pace of their learning and choice of learning modality, although not often in core curricular areas.	Students often have input into the pace of their learning and choice of learning modality, including in some core curricular areas.	Students have regular and multiple opportunities for input into the pace of their learning and choice of learning modality, including in core curricular areas.
Students have few, if any, opportunities to have their voices heard regarding their school environment and/or learning experience. They may not feel included or equal to others.	While students have some opportunities to have their voices heard regarding their school environment, these are not yet frequent or systematic. They may not yet feel included or equal to others.	Students have opportunities to have their voices heard regarding their school environment. While these are more frequent, they are not yet system-wide. They feel included as part of their school and equal to others.	Students have regular, multiple, and system-wide opportunities to have a meaningful voice regarding their school environment. They feel they are included, equal to others, and a valued part of their school.
Students may not yet feel comfortable or safe reaching out for help, although some supports are available and accessible. They do not yet include culturally appropriate supports.	Students feel more confident in reaching out for help. While a variety of supports are available and accessible, they do not yet include culturally appropriate supports.	Most students feel confident in reaching out for help. A variety of supports, including some culturally appropriate supports, are available and accessible.	Students are confident in reaching out for help. A variety of supports, including multiple culturally appropriate supports, are available and accessible.



Understanding of World Views, Values, Identities, Traditions, and Contemporary Lifestyles

- Teach true history.
- Incorporate cultural teachings, experiences, and Indigenous languages.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
Educators are beginning to express a willingness to learn about their own biases and about the impact of historical events and intergenerational trauma on Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.	Educators are engaging in opportunities to learn about their own biases and about the impact of historical events and intergenerational trauma on Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.	Educators seek out and engage in opportunities to learn more about their own biases and origin stories, as well as the impact of historical events and intergenerational trauma on Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.	Educators are committed to continuing their learning and reflection, and to engaging in learning about factors that have an impact on Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.
Students rarely have learning opportunities to discuss the above issues.	Educators are beginning to include learning opportunities for students to discuss the above issues.	Learning opportunities are provided for students to discuss the above issues.	Multiple learning opportunities are provided for students to discuss and address the above issues. This is embedded in daily learning.
Learning opportunities for students do not yet include place-based or land-based learning, multi-sensory learning, or opportunities to learn an Indigenous language.	Learning opportunities for students occasionally include place-based or land-based learning, or multi-sensory learning. Indigenous language learning is not yet present.	While learning opportunities for students regularly include place-based or land-based learning, and multi-sensory learning, these tend to be in language arts or social studies classes. Indigenous language learning, including bilingual learning materials, are being introduced.	Learning opportunities for students regularly include place-based or land-based learning and multi-sensory learning that crosses all curricular areas. Indigenous language learning, including bilingual learning materials, are ever-present.
Communication with families is in the primary language of the school.	Communication with families continues to be in the primary language of the school, but additional languages are recognized.	There are some attempts to use Indigenous languages in communication with families.	Indigenous languages are regularly used in communication with families.

Inclusive and Culturally Safe Learning Environment



- Demonstrate respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions.
- Value and celebrate differences.

Exploring	Emerging	Evolving	Embedding
School/classroom activities and learning opportunities do not yet include Indigenous world views, values, cultural practices, or family-centred activities that are based on community protocols or practices. Indigenous community values are not yet understood or reflected in communication with families and community. Educators are unfamiliar with and/or may be resistant to including Indigenous community practices or protocols or to reflecting Indigenous community values. The school/classrooms do not yet reflect Indigenous cultures, and students and families do not yet share their traditions or cultural practices.	While school/classroom activities and learning opportunities sometimes include Indigenous world views, cultural practices, or family-centred activities based on community protocols or practices, these tend to be at special events. They may not recognize the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and cultures. Indigenous community values are rarely reflected in communication with families or community. While educators are not yet aware of how to include Indigenous community practices or protocols or how to reflect Indigenous community values, they express a willingness to learn. The school/classrooms are not yet seen as culturally safe spaces by students and families. Students and families are reluctant to share their traditions or cultural practices.	School/classroom activities and learning opportunities regularly include Indigenous world views, cultural practices, or family-centred activities that are based on community protocols or practices. The diversity of Indigenous Peoples and cultures is recognized. Indigenous community values are evident in communication with families and community. Educators are engaged in learning about Indigenous community practices and protocols and how to reflect community values. The school/classrooms are usually seen as culturally safe spaces by students and families. Students and families share their traditions and cultural practices when invited.	School/classroom activities and daily learning opportunities include Indigenous world views, cultural practices, and family-centred activities that are based on community protocols or practices. The diversity of Indigenous Peoples and cultures is recognized and celebrated. Indigenous community values are reflected in all communication with families and community. Educators are engaged in continuous learning about Indigenous community practices and protocols and how to reflect community values. The school/classrooms are culturally safe spaces for all. Students and families sharing their traditions and cultural practices (i.e., “the way we do things around here”) is embedded in school culture.



Authentic Involvement

- Promote Elder, Knowledge-Keeper, and community involvement.
- Promote parent, grandparent, and extended family involvement.

Reflections

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Putting Students at the Centre

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