

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

“Everyone has a story and we need the time to explore and understand the story.”

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Liaison, Eastglen High School

Eastglen High School: Inclusive and Welcoming Environment

Eastglen High School in Edmonton attributes much of the success of their 200 self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to the inclusive and welcoming environment of the school. They are creating a community where all students are invited to learn about Aboriginal histories and cultures.



Sharing Culture

The administration demonstrates its strong support of this philosophy in many ways. One way is by dedicating funding to support a permanent First Nations, Métis and Inuit liaison staff position. Another way is by appointing a lead teacher in the area of First Nations, Métis and Inuit education.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit lead teacher and liaison work together to provide professional development on a monthly basis for all staff at the high school.

By building a relationship with staff first, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit team has been able to support an Indigenous philosophy of walking the red road to create a stronger understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and create opportunities to bring resources into the classroom.

The full time First Nations, Métis and Inuit liaison staff member is available to all students, regardless of whether they identify as Indigenous. Some of the services provided are:

- Linking students to academic supports that are available to them.
- Actively involving students in the Student Leadership group
- Involving the Elders.
- Promoting student initiated activities – Student Voice!
- Involving the school and school community as much as possible.

Students are encouraged to reflect on the question “Where did **your** story begin?” By building an understanding of their ancestors, cultures, ceremonies and languages, youth connect with their traditional roots and develop a sense of well-being and respect.

Eliminating Achievement Gaps

The Cree word **Wahkôhtôwin** means inclusive of all or the act of being related to each other.

Completion and Participation Rates Up

Achievement by self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit high school students at Eastglen High School is trending upwards. The 2016 Accountability Pillar indicates that since 2013:

- High School Completion Rate (4 year) improved 25%
- Diploma Exam Participation Rate improved 4%

What Eastglen students say:

“You take the time to listen and get to know us, as people.”

“You encourage us to get involved and learn new things.”

“You connect us to resources to help us to be successful.”



Creating Community!

Eastglen High School embraces a philosophy of providing an inclusive and welcoming environment. All students are welcome to “walk the red road” and gain an understanding of living within the Creator’s instruction. By welcoming non-Aboriginal students and staff, it makes First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and teachings accessible to all.

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Eliminating Achievement Gaps

Discussion Starters:

1. All staff at Eastglen High School engage in monthly professional development activities to deepen their understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students’ cultures, ceremonies, languages and histories. Why is the understanding of school staff an important step in closing the achievement gap of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students?
2. Reflect on the approach used by your school staff to deepen understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, ceremonies, languages and histories. Who participates in the professional learning sessions? How often are the sessions held? Who leads/facilitates the sessions? How can you build on what is currently occurring in your school to deepen all staff’s understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, ceremonies, languages and histories?
3. Eastglen High School invites all students to learn about Indigenous histories and cultures. Why is it important that all of your students understand First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories and cultures? How does this understanding contribute to closing the achievement gap for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students?

For more information:

- [First Nations, Metis and Inuit Professional Learning](#) Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia
- [Walking Together to Support FNMI Student Success](#) Alberta Education, Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium
- [Our Way is a Valid Way](#) Western and Northern Canadian Protocol
- [Moving Forward: Implementing FNMI Collaborative Frameworks](#) Alberta Education
- [Our Words, Our Ways](#) Alberta Education
- [Aboriginal Collection A Thematic Listing of \[Student\]Resources with Aboriginal Content](#) Edmonton Public Schools

Eastglen High School: Inclusive and Welcoming Environment

Wahkôhtôwin:

“The act of being related to each other.”

Eastglen High School is a story about a school that embraces a philosophy of providing an inclusive and welcoming environment. All students are welcome to “walk the red road” and gain an understanding of living within the Creator’s instruction. By welcoming non-Aboriginal students and staff, it makes First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and teachings accessible to all.