

Supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada:

Calgary Catholic
School District
Call to Action



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CCSD Key Messages



**CALGARY CATHOLIC
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*TRC #64: We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on a **comparative religious studies**, which must include a segment on **Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices** developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.*

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015

1.1 Making Connections

TRC #64 is connected with our Catholic Faith and our beliefs related to the sacredness of every individual, made in the image and likeness of God.

- We embrace a spirituality of communion – each person has gifts; all are valued and belong – we are called to build up community & unity (We are all children of God.)
- All persons share the same rights and dignity and are called to live as God's children.
- We teach these values in our curriculum, communities and faith.

1.2 Our Journey: CCSD and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

These are key messages to support your conversations with staff and community when discussing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

- In all of our schools, we work to build inclusive communities where respect for one another, our community and our diversity are celebrated.
- We take a strength-based approach focused on building resiliency through inclusive communities.
- We believe all persons share the same rights and dignity and are called to live as God's children. All persons deserve to feel welcome, safe, included and respected in our schools.
- At this time no additional funds have come from the various levels of government to address the recommendations of the TRC. However, the Calgary Catholic School District has moved ahead to address the recommendations.
- All of our teachers are expected to teach the curriculum. In the existing curriculum there are references to Aboriginal Spiritual Beliefs, Practices, Culture and History.
- Through the work of Instructional Services and collaboration with outside agencies, CCSD has created various lesson sets to support teachers in addressing Aboriginal Spiritual Beliefs, Practices, Culture and History.
- The FNMI and Religious Studies Teams, including elders, have collaborated to create a Curriculum Framework connecting FNMI and Religion.
- The FNMI Team has created many opportunities for staff development, presentations, and field trips.
- We acknowledge that need to infuse Aboriginal artifacts into our schools as a reminder of the history and significance of the Treaties.
- The district regularly consults with Elders to share current practice and to learn how best to serve our students and families.
- We grow as Catholic Communities of Caring by choosing strategies and tools that best meet the needs of our students within each of our unique school communities. We value local autonomy within the context of authentic Catholic education.
- The district is working diligently to eliminate the gap between our FNMI and Non FNMI students. We are committed to supporting our staff through professional development, community resources and training to best serve our students.

CCSD “ReconsiliACTION”

2.1 Collaboration and Planning:

To make the TRC report come alive in CCSD we engaged the power of our community. Many minds, including those of elders like Wanda First Rider, are working on a district TRC committee to plan how we will infuse Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices into our classrooms.

CCSD TRC Committee

Dr. Andra McGinn – Superintendent Instructional Services and Religion

Dr. Bryan Szumlas – Director Instructional Services

Frank McClernon – Supervisor First Nations, Métis, Inuit Education

Howard Campbell – (Cree) Consultant First Nations, Métis, Inuit Education

Wanda First Rider – (Blackfoot) Liaison and District Elder – FNMI Education

Cindy Stefanato – (Ojibwa) Teacher First Nations, Métis, Inuit Education

Jennifer Woo – Supervisor Religious Education

Bradley Sanesh – Consultant Religious Education

Charmaine Monteiro – Consultant Religious Education

Michelle Hoogveld – District Chaplain, Religious Education

Helmut Kaiser – Supervisor Social Studies

Mark Driedger – Consultant Social Studies

Maggie Forsyth – Consultant Social Studies

The committee was instrumental in contributing to the Instructional Services Action Plan and in designing the FNMI/Religion Curriculum Framework.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI)				
Grade/Course/ Measure	Improvements	Administrative Issues	Strategies	Key Indicators
+ <i>Implementation of TRC Recommendations</i>	<i>Support teachers by building connections to issues surrounding the TRC recommendations. Develop a framework to collect feedback from teachers to create a consistent model of curricula.</i>	<i>New TRC recommendations to be implemented. Utilize all the resources of Instructional Services to support this initiative.</i>	<i>Develop comprehensive resources to assist teachers in implementing recommendations from the TRC. Resources are developed with a cross curricular focus. Lesson plans are developed to infuse FNMI perspectives into curricula from core subjects and to increase the level of understanding of teachers and students regarding residential schools.</i>	<i>Worked with religion, FNMI and core subject teams to implement recommendation 64, (to provide an education on comparative religions and include aboriginal spiritual beliefs etc) by creating a document linking specific lessons from every grade to activities with aboriginal perspectives. Key district staff attended multiple TRC symposiums to bring a broader understanding to the District</i> <i>vide.inservic</i>

The following pictures show the CCSD TRC committee working on the creation of FNMI/Religion Curriculum Framework connecting Religious Studies, with Aboriginal Spiritual Beliefs and Practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.



Aboriginal Spirituality Outcomes in CCSD's Religious Education Program

Grade	Unit	Outcome/Key Concept	Resource(s)	Page #s	Enrichment Suggestions/Resources
One	1	LC2.3: Compare the experience of being part of a loving family (living members who are present to us, those living away from us, and deceased relatives) with the concept of the Communion of Saints (i.e. the visible and invisible Church, the Church as both human and divine) and demonstrate how we help each other through our prayers	Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ	TR 97 ST 35	http://www.ammsa.com/publications/alberta-sweetgrass/lac-ste-anne-pilgrimage-about-healing-faith-and-miracles-info-Lac-St.-Anne-Pilgrimage http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=154-info on St. Kateri
Two	1	Compare how families and communities are formed and defined by their common history and stories (i.e. our family ethnicity, culture, language and important relatives who are deceased) to how the Christian Church is formed into a believing community and defined through the inspired stories of Sacred Scripture which reveal our relationship to God, Jesus and to one another.	Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ	TR 40 ST 8	Website regarding FNMI storytelling: http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/storytelling.html
	3	ML2.3: Identify the different actions that we are capable of doing as human beings (e.g., natural actions such as eating, sleeping, running, etc.) and those actions that we are able to think about (i.e. use our reason) before we act and that have consequences of being good or harmful to others and to ourselves.		TR 36-37 ST 102-106	
Three	1	1 - Welcome!/Dreaming with God/Let's Celebrate 1-1 to begin to create a space where all feel comfortable 1-1 to gather our hopes and dreams for the year 1-2 to explore our hopes and dream for the world 1-2 to learn about God's dream of gathering all people into one family 1-3 to prepare a celebration of gathering 1-3 to gather and celebrate God's dream for us	In the Spirit We Belong	ST 10 TR48-52 ST12-13 TR56-63	http://www.historymuseum.ca/cm/exhibitions/aborig/haida/hama01e.shtml Haida masks culture >potlatch">How do aboriginal celebrations differ or are similar to Catholic celebrations culture >potlatch">http://theCanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/collection/aboriginal-peoples/>culture >potlatch
	2	2-4 to explore our gatherings with family and with community 2-4 to appreciate what binds us together in communities 2-6 to remember our oneness by sharing bread		ST19 & 23 TR68-70 ST29-31 TR94-97	culture >religion">http://theCanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/collection/aboriginal-peoples/>culture >religion
	7	7-19 to acknowledge God's Spirit in all creation 7-19 to treasure the gifts of God 7-20 to recognize our mission to have dominion over the earth 7-21 to identify areas where we can make a difference 7-21 to celebrate the earth		ST84-89 TR218-224	Aboriginal Relationship to the Environment http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/r/pca-ac/sec1/sec1g_e.asp

Aboriginal Spirituality Outcomes in CCSD's Religious Education Program

Grade	Unit	Outcome/Key Concept	Resource(s)	Page #s	Enrichment Suggestions/Resources
Four	3	3-7 To appreciate the storyteller in our midst 3-7 To see Jesus as a storyteller	Come and See (CCCB)	TR 92-93 ST 48-49	https://alaskajean.wordpress.com/2010/04/04/the-easter-totem-pole/ Integration of indigenous teachings and christian teachings spiritual symbols
	4	4-10 to explore the experience of darkness and light in our lives		TR 117-118 Storytime: A Great Native Leader - Chief Dan George	
	7	7-19 To appreciate God's (the Creator's) intimate involvement in our lives		TR 196-197 ST 115-16	

Aboriginal Spirituality Outcomes in CCSD's Religious Education Program

Grade	Unit	Outcome/Key Concept	Resource(s)	Page #s	Enrichment Suggestions/Resources
Five	1	1-3 To reflect on God's dream to gather all people as one	May We Be One (CCCB)	TR 64 ST 25-26	<u>Story highlights traditional fishing practices within a family and compared to scripture story..</u> <u>Inclusion</u> <u>Opportunity for cross-curricular discussion of first contact.</u> <u>Enrichment activity relates to bread making which occurs in many cultures</u> http://www.food.com/recipe/native-cree-bannock-bread-21818
	2	2-4 To look at the basic Christian message through the proclamation of Peter		TR 57 ST 37	
	5	5-15 To Celebrate God's faithfulness to all nations		ST 100 - 101	
	3	3-7 To recognize the Church rooted in the Christian story and the breaking of the bread		TR 106f ST 60	
	4	4-10 To enter into the hopes and expectations of people		TR 128 ST 68	
	5	5-13 To discover how God calls again and again		TR 159 ST 91	
	5	5-15 To celebrate God's faithfulness to all nations		TR 169 ST99	
	5	5-15 To celebrate God's faithfulness to all nations		TR 170 ST 100	
	6	6-16 To see justice as essential to being Church		TR 183 ST 109	
	6	6-17 To discover how people welcome and reach out to others		TR 191 ST 113	
	7	7-20 To understand that our unfaithfulness cannot undo God's faithfulness		TR 212 ST 125	
	7	7-19 To see creation as God's covenant		TR 205 ST 122	
	9	9-27 To see the victory of Easter in people's lives 9-27 To realize that the Spirit of Jesus changes people		TR 268 TR 271-272 ST 158-160	

Aboriginal Spirituality Outcomes in CCSD's Religious Education Program

Grade	Unit	Outcome/Key Concept	Resource(s)	Page #s	Enrichment Suggestions/Resources
Six	1	1-2 We listen to a story about friends 1-3 we explore Friendships	You Shall Be My Witness (CCCB)	TR 48 TR 49	http://www.weday.com/We Day and Free the Children http://www.anishinaabemdaa.com/ceremonies.htm
	2	2-6 To reverence the Holy name of God 2-6 To respect every name		TR 86 ST 51	
	9	9-26 To recognize the death and resurrection of the Lord in reconciliation		TR 258 ST 154-15666	
Seven	5	5-1 Students will express their understanding of the meaning in a name and the ways we use names to classify people	Believe In Me (CCCB)	TR 180 ST 86-88 (Titles - Indirect) TR 202-203 ST 99-102 (Images of Jesus - Indirect)	
	6	6-2 Students will examine the things that they are doing in their own lives that either promote or prevent true happiness		TR 220 (optional connection to another culture)	
Eight	4	4-2 Students will retell the stories of some of the saints of the Church and explain how they challenge us	Stand By Me (CCCB)	TR 137-138 ST 83 - 85 (Smallpox - Indirect)	St Kateri Tekakwitha profile and Smallpox epidemic - Leads into research project on Canadian Saints (TR 138-140). Highlight work with Aboriginals and collect as a newspaper.
		4-2 Students will use the stories of one or more saints to find inspiration and courage in the face of a difficult situation		TR 137-138 ST 87-89 ** p. 87 St. Kateri profile	
Nine	2	2-2 Students will respect the unique intellect of each person	Be With Me (CCCB)	ST 34-36	
Eleven		General Outcome D – Students will explore salvation doctrine of other World Religions Specific Outcome - research what other world religions teach about Jesus and the Catholic salvation doctrine Specific Outcome - investigate religious doctrines of salvation in other World Religions Specific Outcome - compare and contrast the Catholic understanding of Jesus with perspectives from other World Religions	Jesus of History, Christ of Faith World Religions: A Canadian Catholic Perspective	pg. 25 Stories of a Community pg. 148-154 The use of Parables Ch. 3 pg. 86-90 on Central Beliefs & Mortality	'Jesus' use of parables to teach connected to Aboriginal Oral storytelling 'Native Folklore' http://www.awchimo.ca/html_at/Culture/metis_spirituality.html Some might be able to be taken from World Religions: A Canadian Catholic Perspective Pg 82-83 under Death Rituals

Aboriginal Spirituality Outcomes in CCSD's Religious Education Program

Grade	Unit	Outcome/Key Concept	Resource(s)	Page #s	Enrichment Suggestions/Resources
Twelve		<p>General Outcome D – Explore and respect how other World Religions understand their sacred texts as guides to moral living</p> <p>Specific Outcome – research how other world religions understand their sacred texts as guides to moral living</p> <p>Specific Outcome - compare and contrast the Catholic understanding of Scripture with sacred texts from other World Religions</p>	In Search of the Good	http://www.ictinc.ca/blog/11-things-you-should-know-about-aboriginal-oral-traditions	

2.2 Aboriginal Spirituality and Practices within our District

This section outlines some of the Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices that emerged from our committee plans and are integrated throughout the Calgary Catholic School District.

2.2.1 Smudging

"Smudging" is the common name given to a powerful cleansing technique from the Native American tradition; however, the burning of herbs for emotional, psychic, and spiritual purification is a common practice among many religious, healing, and spiritual traditions. It is a ceremonial way to cleanse a person, place or an object of negative energies or influences. It is also an effective method for energizing or blessing a person, place or object. The FNMI team shares this practice with CCSD staff and students.



2.2.2 Eagle staff

The Eagle Staff can represent North American Indigenous peoples' heritage, pride, beliefs, history, knowledge, language, culture, governance, geographic location and nationhood. For the Anishinaabeg peoples, the sacredness of the Eagle Staff is how it connects spiritually, emotionally, physically and mentally to mother Earth, and nations. The FNMI department has its own sacred Eagle staff which it uses at various ceremonies and celebrations.



2.2.3 Medicine Wheel Presentation

In Indigenous spirituality, the Medicine wheel represents harmony and connections and is considered a symbol of peaceful interaction among all living beings on earth. The FNMI team presents these teachings and values of sharing, caring, honesty, and respect.

In traditional North American Indigenous culture, Medicine Pouches were used to carry items that was of importance to its owner. The purpose is to make contact with natural spiritual forces that help or guide people to reach their potential. The spirits, or totems, would aid the individual to gather magical items, increase knowledge and aid personal growth. The FNMI team creates these medicine pouches with Division one and two students



2.2.4 Seven Sacred Teachings (or teachings of the Seven Grandfathers)

The traditional concepts of respect and sharing that form the foundation of the Aboriginal way of life are built around the seven natural laws, or sacred teachings. Each teaching honors one of the basic virtues intrinsic to a full and healthy life. It is also used as a framework of conduct towards others. The FNMI team has taught these concepts in Grade 7-9.



2.2.5 The Gathering Drum



The district's Gathering drum was purchased to promote the tradition of making music together and to support and pass on knowledge with the community of teachers in conjunction with the FNMI groups.

The district loan pool offers the Gathering Drum to teachers who have experience and training in regards to the tradition, culture and musicality of the drum. This is an authentic native drum and has been blessed and welcomed into the district.

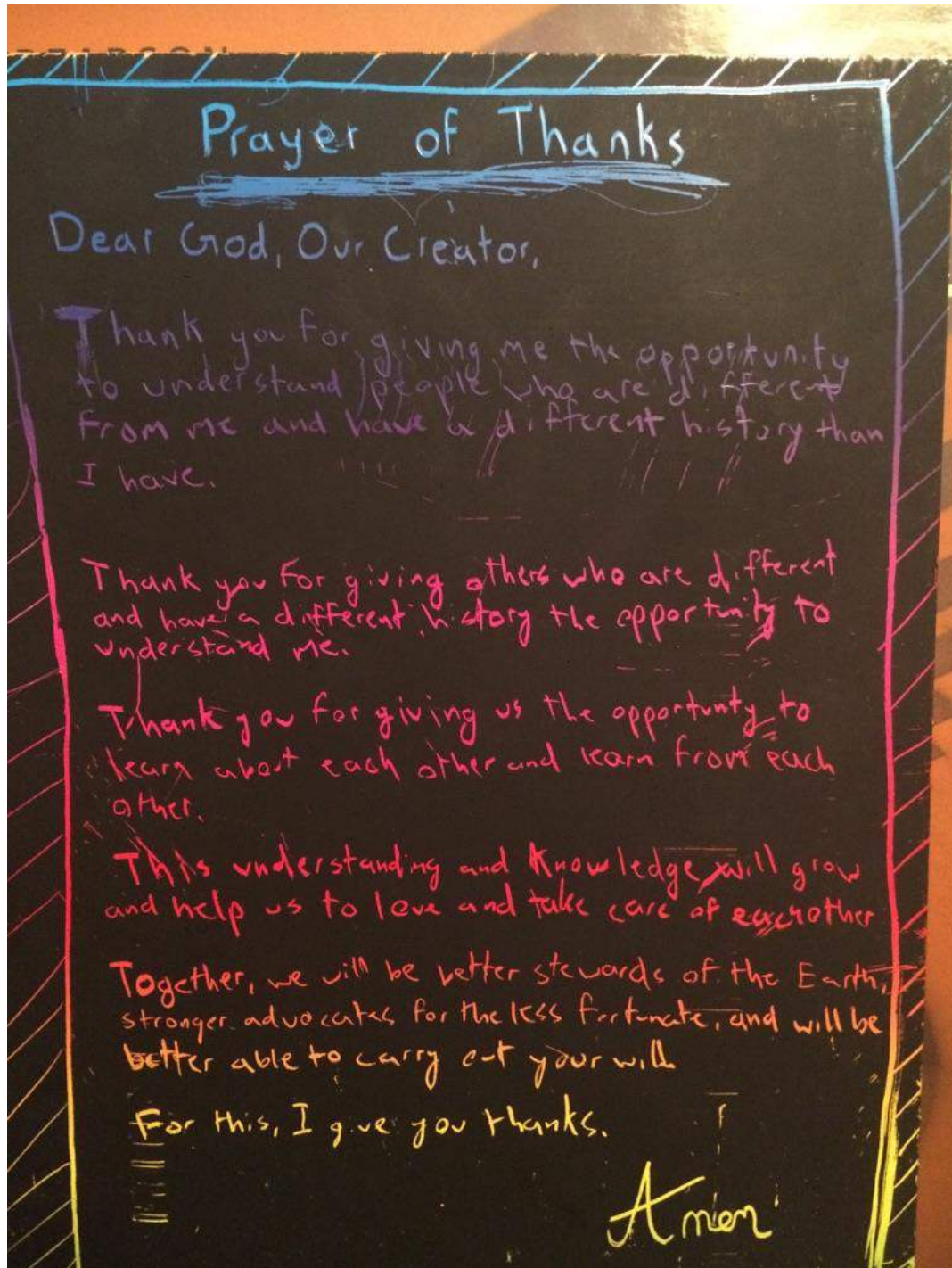
The drum is taken very seriously. Women do not normally play the drum, as only boys play the traditional drum. Knowing this, there is an additional practice pow-wow drum that is utilized for females.

Over the last 20 years, Leah Ronak at Holy Spirit School developed a classroom unit in conjunction with Elders and the community, specifically Hal Eagletail and Wanda First Rider. The songs that are used with the drum were passed down to Leah with the proper traditional First Nations practice and are sung with integrity and respect.

With the JUNOS being held in Calgary this year, our district has an opportunity to perform in the concert in conjunction with the JUNOS Education Committee/CARAS. It is our hope that the Gathering Drum played by our students will be opening the concert. This concert will be held at Mount Royal Concert Hall on Monday, March 16, 2016 @ 7pm.

2.2.6 Student Created Prayers

Led by our District elder, students have created and recited Indigenous themed prayers over the intercom to the student body in several schools. These prayers are said in the student's language.



2.2.7 Saint Study (Gr. 1)

Grade 1 Religion Program has a section on the study of saints. An in-depth study of St. Kateri is encouraged. St. Kateri Tekakwitha is the first Native American to be recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church. She was born in 1656, in the Mohawk village of Ossernenon. Her mother was an Algonquin, who was captured by the Mohawks and who took a Mohawk chief for her husband. St. Kateri Tekakwitha was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 21, 2012. She is the patroness of ecology and the environment, people in exile and Native Americans.



2.2.8 Sweat Lodge

The sweat lodge (also called *purification ceremony* or simply *sweat*) is typically a dome-shaped hut made with natural materials, used by Indigenous peoples of the Americas for ceremonial steam baths and prayer. Native Americans in many regions employ the sweat lodge. In Western Canada, though practiced many different ways, the Sweat Lodge and its meaning is very consistent.

The FNMI team hosts yearly sweats for teachers in order for them to gain a deeper understanding of Aboriginal spirituality.



2.2.9 FNMI Graduation

The Calgary Catholic School District FNMI Graduation Ceremony is an opportunity for our Aboriginal Graduates to celebrate their achievement in a culturally significant way. The graduation ceremony strives to incorporate Aboriginal Spiritual Beliefs and Practices into this important event by creating an opportunity for our students and families to experience their graduation immersed in Aboriginal culture.



2.2.10 Residential School Lesson Set (Grade 10)

The Residential School Lesson Set was created by CCSD staff on our TRC committee to bring further awareness to the history and cultural impact of Residential Schools in Canada. In keeping with the Program of Studies, the intention of this lesson set is to gain insight into the experience of residential Schools for the children and the impact on their Aboriginal identity, as well as to have the students reflect on the legacies of the residential schools.

Connections to the Curriculum

2.9 examine multiple perspectives on the political, economic and social impacts of historical globalization and imperialism

2.11 analyze contemporary global issues that have origins in policies and practices of post-colonial Governments in Canada and other locations (consequences of residential schools, social impact on Indigenous peoples, loss of Indigenous languages, civil strife)

2.12 evaluate various attempts to address consequences of imperialist policies and practices on Indigenous peoples in Canada and other locations

2.13 examine legacies of historical globalization and imperialism that continue to influence globalization

Lesson 1

- a) An introduction to residential schools through the lens of the federal apology.
- b) What were residential schools and what lasting legacy did they have on indigenous communities?

Lesson 2

- a) Residential Schools have had a tremendous impact on all the communities in Canada in the past and have legacy that exists today.
- b) An understanding of the roles and perspectives of various key stakeholders surrounding the topic of Residential Schools both past and present.

Lesson 3

- a) Life at residential schools, and the effects on Aboriginal identities

Lesson 4

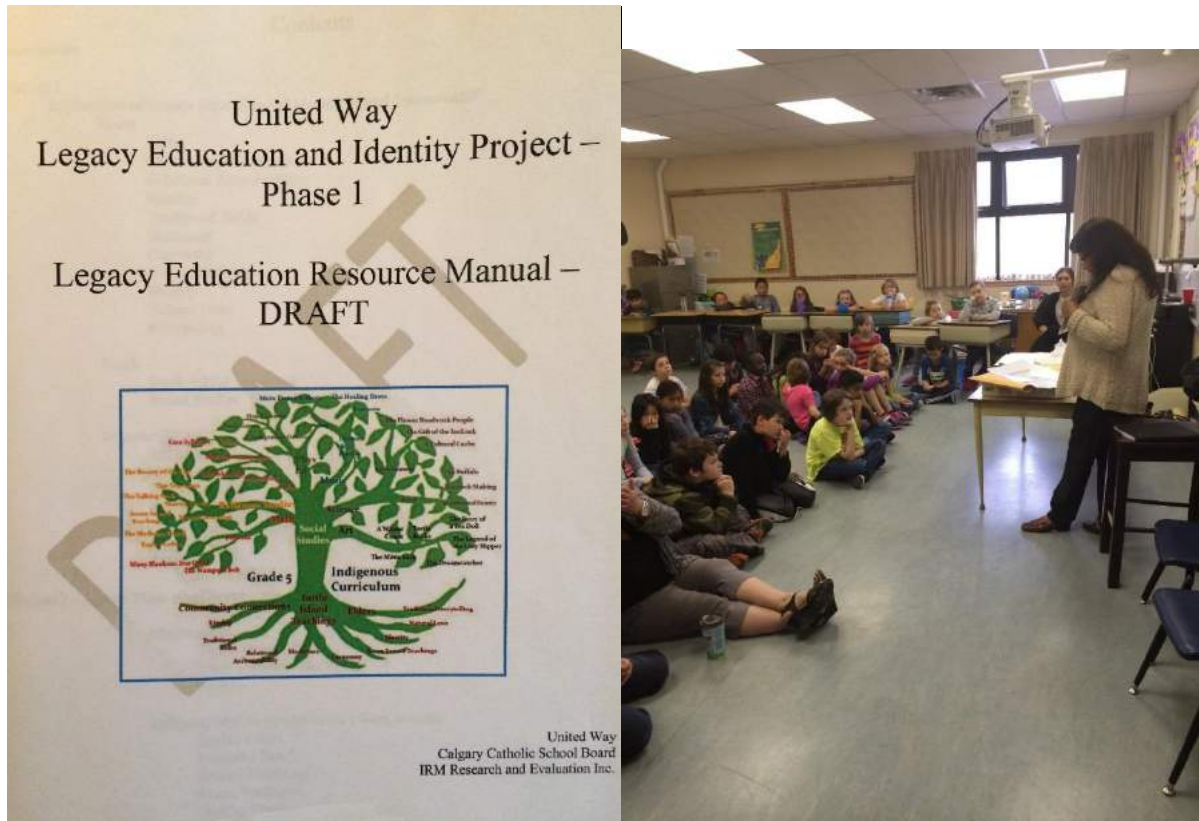
- a) To familiarize the students with the legacies of residential schools.
- b) To have the students reflect on the legacies of the residential schools and discuss possible responses to these legacies at a federal and provincial level.

Lesson 5

- a) The process of reconciliation
 - Change in government policy
 - TRC recommendations

2.2.11 Aboriginal Lessons (Gr. 5)

The Grade 5 Aboriginal Lesson Set is the result of joint effort between Blue Quills University, the United Way and the Calgary Catholic School District. Lessons exist for each subject including a Religion Lesson on the “Talking Stick”.



APPENDICES:

Internal Resources

3.1 Mission and Vision Statements <http://www.cssd.ab.ca/about-us/mission-vision-statements/>

3.2 Policy EL-1, Living the Catholic Faith
http://ccsdmedia.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoardPolicies_Nov.42015.pdf

3.3 Policy E-3, Contributors to Society
http://ccsdmedia.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoardPolicies_Nov.42015.pdf

External Resources

3.5 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

3.6 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
<http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/component/content/article/257-indigenous-peoples/3898-truth-and-reconciliation-commission>