



Parent meeting to share dreams and ideas for a future Aboriginal Learning Centre.

Question: 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)?

Emotional

- Traditional counsellors, as staff.
- Emotional intelligence from an indigenous perspective.
- Parenting programs for those who can't attend day programs.
- Everyone should help each other through positive communication. E.G. Signs – colorful words & pictures. (Not feel forced to).
- One-on-one counselling.
- A place to feel safe and able to express themselves fully.
- Before and & After school programs for students with working parents.
- Movie night. Family themes nights.
- To have Elders / healers / counsellor to help children with trouble feels and help to understand their emotions.
- One stop shopping for families to connect with mental health access.
- Spots to go for self-reflection and relax.
- Needs full time Aboriginal counsellors working not just for students but also for parents.
- The place needs to have a warm, welcoming atmosphere with soft textures, colorful accents, child / youth art work displayed, music available, safe spots to be quiet and get relaxed and centred.
- Access to external services that can support the emotional needs of families (i.e. in-house supports and connectors) → psychology / counselling / psychiatry.
- Food.
- Healing room (circle room).
- Elders.
- Psychologist.
- Counsellors (grief, trauma).
- Therapy (art therapy, play therapy, animal therapy).
- Open to community to utilize.
- Before & After school care (daycare).
- Pre / Post natal professionals.

Physical

- Health and wellness facilities need to be included (i.e. physical health / sports / active living) at or no cost to our families. → gyms / workout facilities / active living programs.
- Prepare small children through preschool to influence the children to grow as good / better adults.
- Sports centre & programs for youth & families.
- Community kitchens.
- Large cooking & eating area.
- Literacy programs for adults.
- The ability to move in a safe child friendly space.

- An outdoor space that has a playground.
- A natural space with gardens, trees.
- Swimming.
- A place: architect-shape of medicine wheel.
- In each place to teach that section on medicine wheel.
- Breaking it down to each of the teaching in that area of the medicine wheel.
- After school activities.
- Daycare.
- Busing.
- Cultural, learning.
- Free eye exams & eyeglasses, free dental exams & work on teeth, free ear testing & aids, etc. etc. speech therapy.
- Needs a gym with tipis inside.
- A playground area for all ages. → Very large area with picnic tables.
- Better bus routes. A lot of Aboriginal programming.
- Sound system in every classroom.
- Medical outreach
 - dentist
 - pediatrician
 - eye
- Facility to host community events (commercial kitchen).
- It's a house → a tipi structure as part of the actual building.
- House a childcare facility.
- Gym, workout facility, walking track, etc.
- A fully equipped gymnasium.
- Different after school opportunities, i.e. martial arts, recreational activities, painting.
- I hope to see nature add to the building. Like a big indoor garden. For kids to stay in touch to nature.
- Drumming / musical equip.
- Playground.
- Plants / living wall.
- Water features (indoor).
- Wheelchair accessible.
- Emphasis on nature and land.
- Full-time health nurse.
- Wheelchair accessible.
- Prenatal Centre.
- Trainers / dietitian.
- Doctor partnerships.
- Dentist partnerships.
- Sports programs.
- Transportation - cabs, bussing, transit.
- Gym, fitness centre, climbing walls.
- Playground.
- Baseballs, track pool, yoga, (Recreation centre).
- Art studio.
- Medicine (traditional).
- Cafeteria for students, families, staff.
- Nutritionist.
- Shop for building, lab for science (environmental lab).
- Environmentally friendly initiatives.
- Elders room.
- Sunroom (retractable roof).
- Sewing room.

- Water features – atrium (aspects of nature).
- Built with a lot of natural products.
- Busing – accessibility.
- Kitchen with several stations.
- Studio / instruments.
- Round table.
- Dance studio, recording studio, theatre for performing, greenroom, filming.
- Outside space.
- Greenhouse.
- Big windows.
- Tipi room – for teaching (girls / boys group).

Spiritual

- The place needs to have scheduled times for ceremonies; for example if it happens to be Remembrance Day have a ceremony honouring Aboriginal veterans and current people in service.
- Begin day with smudging and prayer.
- Aboriginal languages taught / used.
- Providing in-house support at all times (i.e. Elders) to support families from a spiritual perspective.
- Elders need to be from all backgrounds (Blackfoot, Cree, Métis, etc.).
- Ceremonies
 - School
 - Communities (evening & weekends).
- Elders as an integral part of the staff (two; male & female).
- Elders room.
- Place for families of students to participate.
- Ceremony room.
- A place (big space) where the school can accommodate Pow-Wow and be able to invite parents and the community around it.
- Definitely needs tipis where students can have quiet time.
- Colorful – not black & grey – colors.
- Continue with the teaching of nature languages. Blackfoot, Cree etc. Good for children to learn at school.
- A place that makes you feel welcome.
- Music.
- Ceremony room (blankets, rugs).
- Outdoor space for ceremony (arbor for Pow-Wow).
- Garden for sage growth, various plants (in a circle).
- Place for Pow-Wow.
- Feasts, round dancing.
- Sweat lodge.
- Smudge friendly rooms.
- To feel welcome inside & out, to be able to understand how to stay healthy, connected to nature.
- Elders room.
- Sweat lodge area.
- Round dance & gathering area.
- Community recreational area.

Mental

- An environment that allows children / youth to display their learning in whatever manner that looks like, lots of resources, kits, books that relate to Aboriginal people, culture and history.
- A place for all children to come regardless of their ability or diagnosis.
- Build relationships with other tribes.
- Elders.
- Teachings for Elders.
- Rights of passage.
- Experienced teachers with aboriginal education as a focus.
- Experienced staff – staff incentives – staff retention.
- Language programs.
- Fosters dignity and respect.
- A calming place with tranquility, also for students at all different levels of learning.
- Providing an environment that fosters and places a high emphasis on mental well-being.
- Reach out to the Aboriginal community where all nations / tribes are accepted.
- Needs a place / program where parents who are non-Aboriginal get trainings / help in taking care of kids.
- Teacher training.
- Program partnerships.
- Human resources, maintain relationships and roles within the centre.
- Psychologist.
- Camps – summer programming.
- Drama.
- Need Aboriginal role models.
- Library.
- Technology – lab.
- Mentors.
- Guest speakers.
- Traditional knowledge
 - drumming
 - hunting (outdoor led)
 - language
 - dance
 - arts – hide
 - food prep (dry meat) smokehouse.
 - regalia.
- Role models for youth.
- Adopt a grandparent centre.
- Big brother / sister program.
- Teach Aboriginal history, knowledge and worldview.
- Teach the languages.
- Have equal access to all available resources.
- To learn their culture / heritage.

Questions

- Opportunity for our Elders to visit other community schools. i.e. Oskayak in Saskatchewan.
- What about safety if all Aboriginals can access services?
- Why don't we get signatures to pressure the government in approving this plan / provide the money / budget?
- Is there any fund raising?
- Is Piitoayis School moving to the new place?
- Are you going to integrate support services for the whole family?