

ASD-West District Education Council

Circle of Understanding Sessions

Schedule of Topics

(Sept. 22, 2022 – June 29, 2023)

Circle of Understanding Program (Description/Objectives):

Circle of Understanding sessions are designed to promote understanding and appreciation of Wolastoqey histories, cultural patterns, traditions, ancestral teachings, traditional knowledge, Aboriginal rights, treaty rights, self-determination, land claims and contemporary conditions. These sessions also explore the numerous contributions made by Wolastoqiyik in the history of New Brunswick as well as contemporary society. In addition, the sessions will provide an opportunity for participants to review a sample of stereotypes and misconceptions held by the general public. Wolastoqey responses to these misconceptions will be presented as well.

The Circle of Understanding sessions promote the principles of respect, sharing, harmony, interdependence and balance of mind, body and spirit. These principles are consistent with the overall framework promoting unity within diversity. Session will also provide an opportunity for individuals to participate in ancestral traditions such as the Sacred Pipe, Sweatlodge and Smudging Ceremonies. Furthermore, the "Talking Circle" is a major component of these sessions. Talking Circles will provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions or reflect on topics and/or presentation.

In the area of education, Circle of Understanding sessions provide a general overview of the experiences of Wolastoqi students attending ASD-West public schools. They examine the formal and informal aspects of the teaching-learning process in historical and contemporary terms. Formal aspects will include the roles of educators, role relationships, institutional goals, curriculum, classroom environment/structure, successful teaching strategies, parental involvement and developing initiatives consistent with culturally-based education. Informal aspects will include the role of Elders, socialization of Wolastoqi children, traditions, learning styles, traditional pedagogies, values, worldviews, and other cultural influences. Sessions for educators, administrators and policy-makers will also end with a Talking Circle.

Date	Topic
September 22	Truth and Reconciliation Day, September 30
October 20	We Are All Treaty People: Peace and Friendship Treaties, Treaty Day
November 16	Wabanaki People: Historical and Contemporary Contributions

December 15	Stereotypes and Misconceptions
January 26	Wolastoqey Title, Land Claims
February 23	Wolastoqey Cultural Foundation: Worldviews, Knowledge System
March 30	Wolastoqey Cultural Foundation: Ceremonies
April 27	Wolastoqey Medicines
May 25	Indian Act, Self-Determination
June 29	Culturally-Based Education

Notes

- (a) Each Circle of Understanding session will be 15 minutes
- (b) Unfortunately, we will not have enough time for Talking Circles
- (c) I encourage members to suggest topics for future DEC meetings and workshops