**Elders & Knowledge Holders Protocol for SD 50 Haida Gwaaii**

Nov. 2013

*The purpose of the Elders & Knowledge Holders in classrooms is to assist teachers to integrate Haida knowledge and perspective into the curriculum and to establish connections between the school district community and the Haida community.*

When planning to initiate Elder/Knowledge Holder visits, the following guidelines will aid in ensuring that the Elder and students have a positive experience.

It is important that expectations are clearly laid out and everyone participating is informed of the program and the process prior to the visit.

* Contact the FNRW (First Nations Resource Worker) in your school with a clear idea of your classroom needs. The FNRW will provide advice and assist the teacher throughout the process.
* Teacher & FNRW determine the focus of discussion or demonstration. Teacher to ensure the elder has enough to share during the visit. How much time is available? Is it a one time session or will the Elder be required for more sessions? How many students will be involved, whole class or small group?
* Location will this occur in the classroom or outside? Determine best time of day for the visit.
* Supplies, materials resources required, & who is responsible for obtaining them?
* FNRW to confirm with classroom teacher who will contact the Elder/Knowledge holder either the classroom teacher or FNRW the Elder/Knowledge is then booked.
* It is advisable to give Elders at least **1 week’s** notice, as they may have a busy schedule and need adequate time to prepare. It is recommended that FNRW re-contact Elder the day before the visit, and again in the morning of the day of the visit to confirm the preparations.
* If transportation for the Elder/Knowledge Holder is required, the FNRW and/or host teacher should arrange this.
* Inform administrator and office staff of the name of the visitor and the time and purpose of the visit well in advance.
* *Elders should only be brought into the classroom when teachers & students have developed good questions to ask them and/or are ready to listen respectfully, observe & practice a skill being shared. Review what respect feels like when it is in action.*
* Every Elder has his or her own personal history and strengths that can be a rich resource for the students. Where possible, teachers are encouraged to talk with elders before bringing them in, to gain a better understanding of their unique qualities and the learning possibilities they bring to the classroom. Teachers should also consider the use of field trips and outdoor settings that will help share their knowledge more fully.
* The knowledge and perspectives of different Elders/Knowledge Holders are complementary to one another, often resulting in deeper insights into Haida history, culture, and contemporary life.
* *Students should be prepared to treat Elders/Knowledge Holder with respect, to make them feel welcome, and to express appreciation for their contributions****.*** One or two students should be asked to greet the Elder/Knowledge Holder when they arrive and depart the school and bring them to the classroom.
* *Be sure to have a beverage for the Elder/Knowledge Holder in the classroom during the visit (water, tea coffee depending on the length of the visit you may also need a light snack available).*
* Following the Elder/Knowledge Holder’s last visit, the students should thank them, by writing letters, sending them drawings or other work, or presenting them with photographs taken during their time with the class. It is equally important for all the school staff to help to make the Elder/Knowledge Holder feel welcome by acknowledging them with a greeting when they are in the school.
* Host teacher to refer to visit in following classes to ensure the visit was meaningful, validates and connects the purpose for the visit. (not an isolate activity)