

LRSD Powwow expands to the community



On Thursday, May 4, students from all over Livingstone Range came together for the annual powwow held at Fort Macleod schools, but this year the event included more students, welcomed more guests and generated more buzz than it ever has before.

The event was blessed with sunny skies and a not-too-generous helping of southern Alberta wind, providing everyone with an exciting and enjoyable experience.

Also new this year, CTV News Lethbridge was on hand to record colourful footage of the event and to speak with organizers and LRSD administration about its significance, not just as an experience for students but as a means to build bridges between Indigenous peoples and the broader community.

Check out the [CTV footage](#), and read our media release below for more information.

Powwow media release (April 28):

F.P. Walshe and W.A. Day Schools in Fort Macleod are gearing up to host a colourful explosion of culture and learning for *Ohkaniposiyo'op* (“getting everyone together”) – a division-wide powwow on Thursday, May 4th. The event, which has previously involved only the Fort Macleod schools, is expanding this year to include students from all over Livingstone Range School Division (LRSD), and could see attendance nearing 2,000.

In addition to traditional powwow activities like drumming, dancing and enjoying Aboriginal foods, the event will provide an opportunity for all students to share and celebrate Indigenous culture and make connections with one another and their communities. Throughout the day, students will create art, play Blackfoot games, hear stories from elders, watch the raising of a tipi and learn about post-secondary opportunities through Lethbridge College and the University of Lethbridge.

W.A. Day School Principal, Richard Feller, notes the event builds understanding while aligning with Alberta Education curriculum on First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) culture.

“It is our sincere intention to create an authentic and engaging learning opportunity to help bring meaning for students as they participate within the Alberta learning agenda,” says Feller. “This provides an occasion to build positive relationships and reciprocal understanding. [We learn] about how our First Nations view themselves and our world as we walk together.”

Duane Petluk, F.P. Walshe School teacher and FNMI Liaison, says this event is the largest in LRSD history and that it signals a bright future for all students.

"I have been teaching for many years and I have never, ever, been a part of an event that I am more proud of," says Petluk. "Ohkaniposiyo'op - Getting Everyone Together, makes me proud to be a Livingstone Range School Division teacher, proud to be an FP Walshe teacher and proud to be Indigenous."

Also in attendance at the event will be: Piikani and Kainai Chief and Council representatives; Miss Blackfoot Canada, Gloria Good Eagle; Piikani Nation School dancers; Alberta Order of Excellence recipient Dr. Leroy Little Bear; World Champion Ironman, Blake Yellowhorn & Ironwoman, Maya Many Grey Horses; and other delegates of the Kainai and Piikani Nations and local community.

Media is also invited to attend the celebration, which will kick off at **9:30 a.m. on the F.P. Walshe School track.**

“This is a wonderful opportunity to build, maintain and celebrate the mutually, respectful relationships that exist and seek additional ways to walk and live together harmoniously in the spirit of education and reconciliation,” says Georgina Henderson, Livingstone Range’s FNMI Success Coordinator. “We welcome all guests to learn together, enjoy and celebrate with us.”