

Rainbow District School Board, Review Committee

We understand the situation of schools that have to close their doors due to smaller population, or even the cost of repairs to a building if it's feasible, or whatever issue it is you base your decision on.

Whatever decision is made here with this review committee will certainly effect Dokis First Nation.

We too are facing the same decision on what to do with our school because our population is getting smaller and in the coming years it doesn't look to promising with our small populated community. It is good that our young adults are concentrating on their education and their careers first

In the early years our school population was approximately 30 to 35 students from grade 1 to grade 8, and when we started transferring our students to Monetville Public School in the year 1970 we still had approximately 20 students or more from JK to grade 4. But this year too, we are suffering from low student population.

Our numbers are low and getting lower. Next year we are facing the lowest we have had in the years our school has been open and we too need to make a decision or Indian and Northern Affairs will make it for us.

Our first school started in the little church during the summer months of 1918. In 1928 the Community Hall was built and school started in the hall on a full time regular basis that year.

In 1955 our first school was constructed, known as Dokis Day School, and taught grades one to eight.

From 1918 to 1970 our students did the majority of their education in our Day School with the exception of high school. High School students went to Noelville, Sturgeon Falls, North Bay, or some went to Sudbury,

It was in the school year of 1970-1971 when our children started attending Monetville Public School for grades 7 & 8. They started traveling the 25 kilometre dirt road on a school bus daily to attend Monetville school.

In 1971-1972 it was decided that Dokis School would only go to grade four and our students from grade 5 to grade 8 would attend Monetville Public School

In 1995 our second little school was built, again it only housed JK to grade 4 and our students from grade 5 and up continued attending Monetville Public School. And our high school students attend Northern Secondary School in Sturgeon Falls.

In the year 2005 our teachers and students moved in to their new school, "Kikendawt Kinoomaadii Gamig". Again our grades go only to grade 4.

We have qualified teachers that are members of the Ontario College of Teachers and we pay their fees on an annual bases. Marthe Restoule has been a member of our staff for many many years teaching the primary grades and Nathan Moore has been with us for one year and will stay on with us indefinitely teaching the junior grades. He enjoys teaching at our school and living in our community as with many other teachers before him.

We send our teachers on workshops continually to improve their skills and to network with other schools and teachers on and off reserves. Our teachers have also gone to Monetville Public School for workshops on Professional Development Days, depending of course if our teachers will benefit what their workshops are.

In our last school year in 2009/2010 we implemented the EQAO Assessment test to our grade 3 students. Our results were extremely well. It showed us we were on the right track with keeping up with the provincial level that we should be at. This also gave us the feeling that our children in grade 4 would make an easy transition to grade 5 at Monetville Public school.

We also have our grade 4 children attend Monetville Public School throughout the school year to help them familiarize themselves with Monetville and again to help them make that easy transition.

This year we have been working on a Literacy program to implement into next year's program, we are also focusing on Numeracy and our Native Language program.

We have three class rooms that are fully equipped with all the resources we need. We also continuously build on these resources. We have the technical resources for our students, laptops, internet, smart boards, over head projectors etc etc. Almost everything you have in your schools out here we have in our school.

We contract a retired teacher who is also a community member and who specializes in Special Education, to ensure all special needs students receive the attention they need such as assessments, psychological assessments and she helps implement the proper IEP's needed for each special needs students.

We built a school Library for our students where they go for their reading programs, to listen to stories from our elders and adults and for various other activities It is designed specifically for our culture, meaning the wall muirs in the library are fish in water laying eggs to represent the life cycle and that also we are living on an island surrounded by water. Another wall muir represents our clans coming together as they use to in the past. We also have pictures of our elders representing number one, our elders and two, the two families that have always lived in Dokis First Nation.

We have also implemented the Roots of Empathy program into our daily activities.

Our school is a feeder school for Monetville Public School. We follow the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum guidelines. We have incorporated the EQAO assessment test as with the Provincial schools in Ontario and we are busy working on a Literacy program that will be incorporated into our school next year and again this is to ensure that our children are up to par with the provincial level and to ensure an easy transition from Kikendawt Kinoomaadii Gamig to Monetville Public School.

Our decision that we have to make on keeping our school open will reflect on your decision to keep Monetville Public School open or to close it and also our enrollment.

I know that our parents do not wish to send their young children that are starting JK to another school so far away. Either it be to Monetville Public School or to another English speaking school in Sturgeon Falls.

Our options are to hold back two more grades, 5& 6, or to close the school down and send our children to Monetville Public School. However, If Monetville closes than we have no choice but to keep it open with our children staying in our school from JK to grade 6. With the possibility of opening our doors to the general public who live in the Rainbow District School Board and to have a reverse tuition with you.

Rainbow District School Board prides itself for working with First Nation's and their students. Rainbow District School Board has committed themselves to improve the success rate of First Nation Students.

Unfortunately with this decision you have to make we need to wait before we can make our decision.

However, I do want to stress that should you decide to close Monetville Public School we do have a wonderful school with all the proper necessities and we do follow the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum guidelines and their standards.