

Community Home School Liaisons

Jurisdiction: Newfoundland & Labrador

Contact: Eldred Barnes

Level: K-12

Theme: Community Based Practices

Description of Practice:

Community Home-School Liaisons have been employed in Innu communities to work with parents in supporting school attendance. Personnel employed in these positions come from their respective communities. They work closely with the school administration, the band council and community members to ensure that student attendance is regular. Their primary focus is on supporting parents of primary and elementary students. More direct one-on-one guidance is provided for high school students.

Background:

Student attendance and retention have been a persistent challenge for schools in Innu communities in Labrador. The Innu communities are experiencing challenges in the integration of their traditional value into the provincial school system. For example, during the school year, students engage in traditional pursuits by traveling with their families. These times are recognized and supported by the band council and the community. Within this context, the establishment of the Home-School Liaison position will help build supports for Innu families and encourage good relations between the school and the community.

Development:

These positions emanated from a study of Innu education in Labrador. School attendance was highlighted as one of the major factors impacting school achievement. Based upon the research finding of its success within other Aboriginal communities, the study recommended such positions be created in Labrador.

Evidence:

The program is an effective means of supporting and enabling parents in having their children attend school. School attendance has improved and communication among the school administration, the band council and the community generally has improved.

Adaptability:

The Community Home-School Liaison has been successfully employed in other Aboriginal communities in Canada. It is a strategic and non-threatening way for the community to bridge potential gaps in communications between the school and community and strengthens community resolve to support youth in their education.

Further Information:

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