



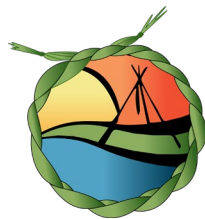
White Bear First Nations & White Bear Education Complex in Partnership with  
Treaty Education Alliance Presents:

# Student Engagement Report 2026



**TREATY**  
EDUCATION ALLIANCE





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TREATY EDUCATION ALLIANCE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT REPORT 2026

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DESIGNED AND PRODUCED BY AARON TOOTOOSIS

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is with great pride and excitement that I am able to write these opening remarks and share the 2026 Treaty Education Alliance Student Engagement Report for White Bear First Nations. At its heart, this report is about amplifying student voices and honouring their perspectives, experiences, and aspirations.

While we continue to build and strengthen meaningful connections through events and initiatives, these engagement sessions offered powerful insight into where our collective efforts must be focused. Students clearly shared what they see, what they need, and how they envision an education system rooted in Inherent and Treaty Rights looks like. As we move forward, we will be guided by their voices so that we all can work to better support learners and educators in White Bear First Nations.

As we look ahead, our commitment to deepening engagement, strengthening relationships, and exploring new ways of working together leads the way in how we work. Your ongoing participation and collaboration are vital to our shared success.

We are deeply grateful to the students who participated in the Student Engagement Session on February 5. Their respectfulness, thoughtful contributions, and genuine enthusiasm were really inspiring. We thank them for their openness, honesty, and care in sharing their voices.

Kinanâskomitinawaw,



Faith Watson  
Executive Director  
Treaty Education Alliance



## THE SPIRIT AND INTENT OF TREATY

The Spirit and Intent of Treaty refers to the foundational principles, purposes, and shared understandings that shaped the creation of Treaties beyond their written text. This concept highlights the sacred, relational, and enduring nature of Treaties—particularly those between Indigenous Nations and Peoples and the Crown of Great Britain and Ireland. It is a core value guiding the work of the Treaty Education Alliance (TEA) and must be respected and upheld by all TEA partners and by Canada. Key elements include:

### **Sacredness and Respect**

Treaties are sacred agreements made before the Creator, binding both parties to honor commitments in good faith and mutual respect, often symbolized through the use of the pipe or pipestem. The act of “signing” holds no sacred meaning within Indigenous laws and customs, which predate British law by thousands of years.

### **Permission**

Indigenous Nations and Peoples maintain that they granted the Crown conditional permission to exist within their territories, as declared in the Numbered Treaties. The Crown does not have the authority to grant rights to Indigenous Nations or place them in a position to negotiate those rights. As long as the Crown and Canada wish to maintain this existence, they must fully provide what was promised at the Treaty Table.

### **Mutual Benefit**

The Crown was permitted to use and benefit from the land only to the depth of a plow—reflecting a limited and respectful use of resources.

### **Oral Traditions and Understandings**

While Treaties were recorded in writing, those documents represent only a fraction of the agreement. Oral history and teachings passed down through generations are essential for interpreting Treaties. Canadian courts cannot fully interpret Treaties without these understandings.

### **Living Documents**

Treaties are living agreements, intended to be upheld and adapted over time. Their commitments were meant to last “for as long as the Sun shines, the Grass grows, and the Rivers flow,” signifying an eternal relationship rather than a one-time transaction.

### **Balance and Harmony**

From a First Nations perspective, Treaties were designed to maintain balance and harmony with newcomers. The intent was to share land and resources in ways that respected Natural Laws and ensured ongoing cooperation under Indigenous laws and customs.

Understanding the Spirit and Intent of Treaties means recognizing that the written text alone never conveyed the full meaning of the Treaties. It requires embracing the historical, cultural, and spiritual contexts in which these agreements were made.



# WHITE BEAR FIRST NATIONS

## White Bear Education Complex (WBEC)



White Bear First Nations is located in Treaty 2 Territory in the Moose Mountains in South East Saskatchewan. In early September of 1875 Wahpemukwa was selected by his people to enter into Treaty No. 4 with The Crown of Great Britain. The White Bear First Nations are referred to in the plural to represent the 4 distinct Nations that make up the First Nation, which are the Plains Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, and Dakota.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TECHNICAL TEAM



**BRIAN STANDINGREADY**  
Advisor



**FAITH WATSON**  
Executive Director



**VERN SEVERIGHT**  
Advisor



**JACLYN YUZICAPPI**  
Recording Secretary



**AARON TOOTOSIS**  
Communications  
Coordinator

The Community Engagement Technical Team, along with our Elders' Advisory Council, works to plan and organize all Student Engagement sessions in our Member Nations. Progressively attended engagement sessions were held in our Member Nations to seek feedback directly from our key stakeholder groups: the Elders, Students and Staff.

The intent of community engagement sessions is to ask key questions in surveys that will be interpreted into visual and print data as you will see in this Student Engagement Report. The survey questions are developed by our Community Engagement Technical Team to capture data that respects:

- **Honouring Inherent and Treaty Rights** – ensuring First Nations' legal and cultural foundations are respected.
- **Promotes cultural relevance** – integrating language, traditions, and worldviews into learning.
- **Supports sustainability** – building long-term structures and resources for future generations.
- **Advances self-determination** – empowering First Nations to lead and govern their own educational systems in accordance to Indian Control of Indian Education.

The Student Engagement Session in White Bear First Nations was held on February 5, 2026 at the White Bear Education Complex gymnasium.



## SURVEY AND DATA COLLECTION

WBEC Students in Grades 6 - 12 attended the Student Engagement Session. Students were split equally into 5 randomly chosen groups. Flip chart paper was used and TEA Technical Team and School Staff volunteered to record or students wrote their own answers.



The students were asked to give their best answers for the following questions:

1. What does the Treaty Right to Education mean to you?
2. What are the most important things you should be learning at school?
3. What do you like about your school?
4. What are some things you don't like about your school?
5. If you could create the world's best school, what would it look like?



Students answered the questions and provided really great answers. Rather than have the answers typed into this document, we took the opportunity to listen to the advice of Senator Brian Standingready and acknowledge the power of the student voices as, "the writing on the wall", which can be a greater influence of change than a document that is typed. The intellect, energy, and time that students took that went into answering the questions will be honoured. The next few pages of this report will be photos of the flip charts that were taken after the Student Engagement Session was completed.

① What does the Treaty right to education mean to you? <sup>1st group</sup>

- ① Special
- ② Respect
- ③ Honor
- ④ Blessing
- ⑤ helpful
- ⑥ Privilege

2nd Group

- ① happy
- ② understandable

4th Group

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| ① respect   | ① Work                                       |
| ② helpful   | ② KIND                                       |
| ③ blessing  | ③ Education                                  |
| ④ Kindness  | ④ Honour                                     |
| ⑤ special   | ⑤ Land Based / outdoor <sup>Fun</sup>        |
| ⑥ Privilege | ⑥ Cultural Classes                           |
| ⑦ Banking   | ⑦ Creep class / DAKOTA<br>SAULTNEAU / NOKOTA |
|             | ⑧ Drumming / SINGS                           |

5th Group

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| ① Kindness  | ① Land Based / <sup>Fun</sup>                |
| ② special   | ② Cultural Classes                           |
| ③ Privilege | ③ Creep class / DAKOTA<br>SAULTNEAU / NOKOTA |
| ④ Banking   | ④ Drumming / SINGS                           |

3rd Group

- ① Fun
- ② Connect People better
- ③ Meaningful
- ④ Bonding
- ⑤ Know who we are
- ⑥ Become what we want
- ⑦ Teach at home

5th Group

- Everything -
- Be proud of yourself
  - Become what ever you want
  - careers
  - role model



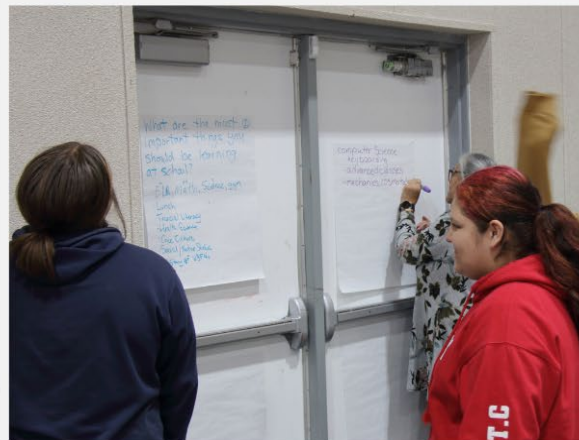
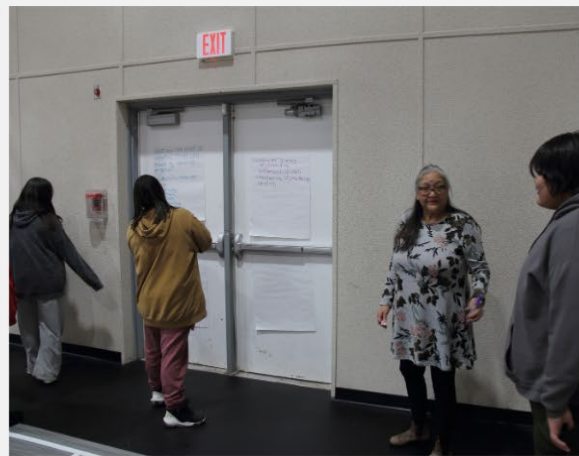
What are the most ② important things you should be learning at school?

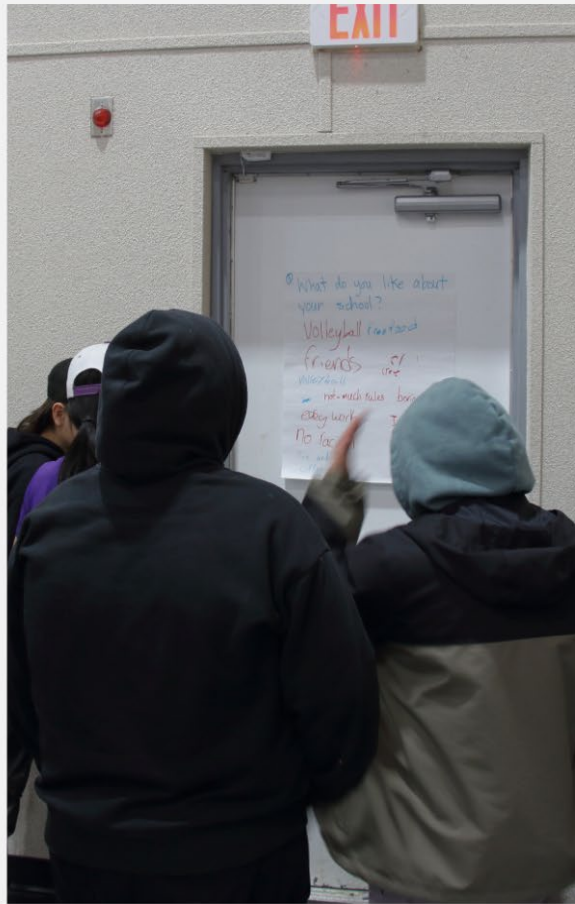
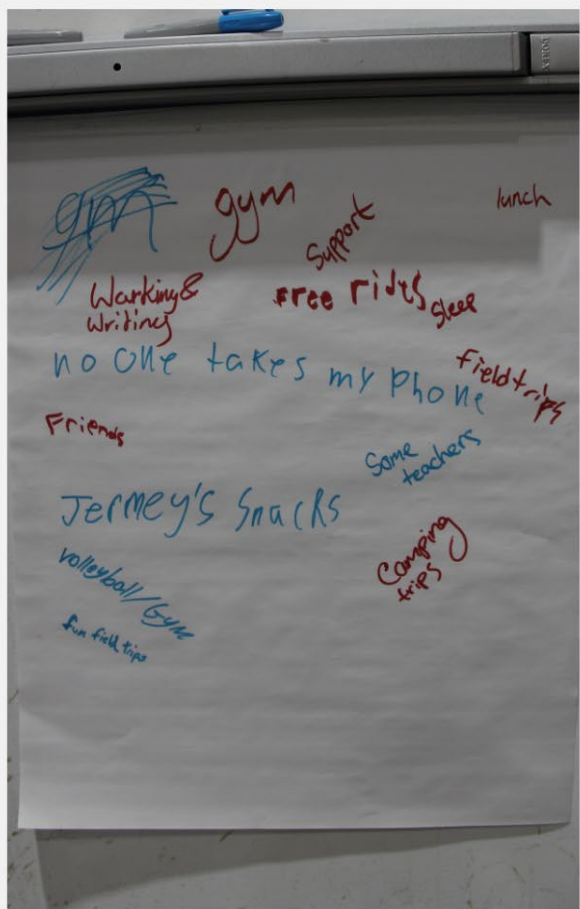
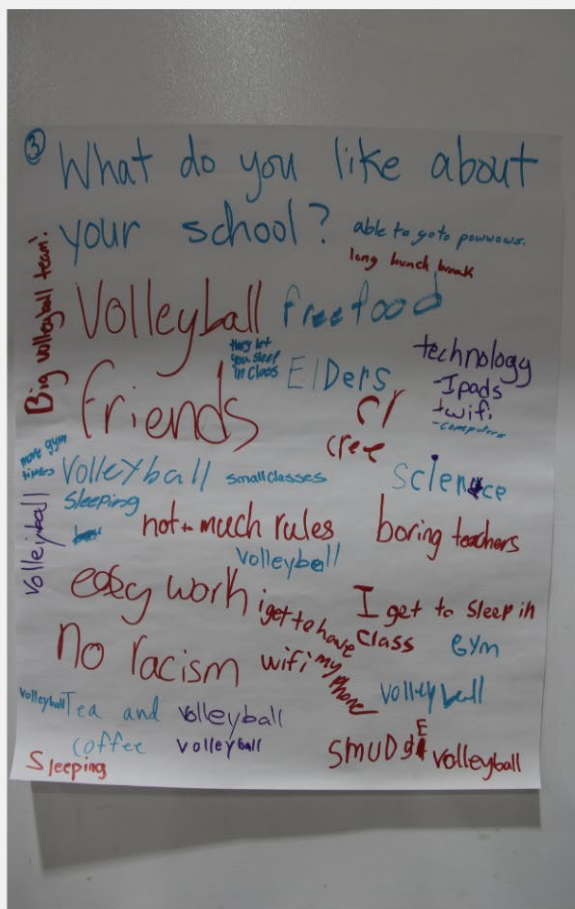
- ELA, Math, Science, gym, Bio
- Lunch - Culinary arts - Home Ec. - Food Safety
- Financial Literacy - taxes, investments, credit
- Health Sciences - Healthcare, Life
- Cree Culture - FN's Cultures
- Social / Native Studies
- History of WBFNs.
- Respect
- Treaties
- Traditional / Herbal Medicine
- Sports

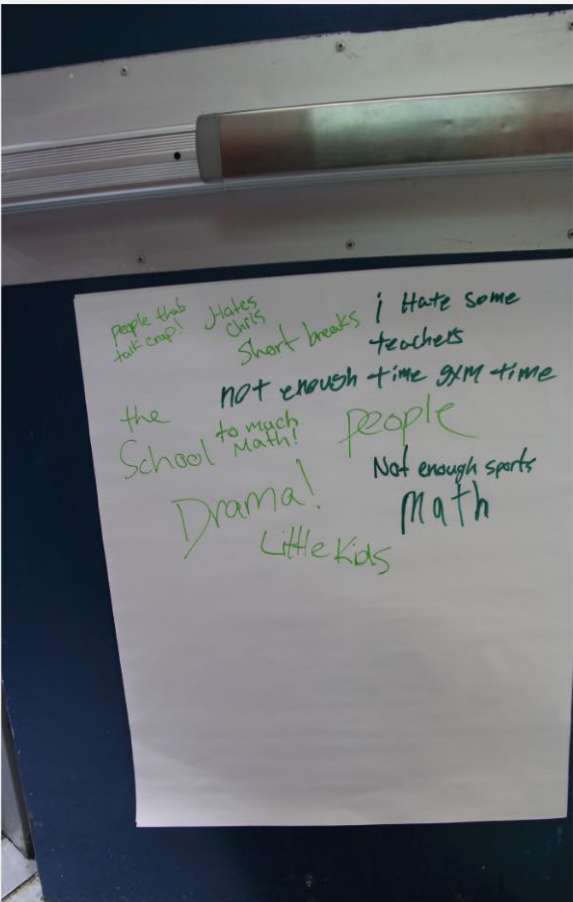
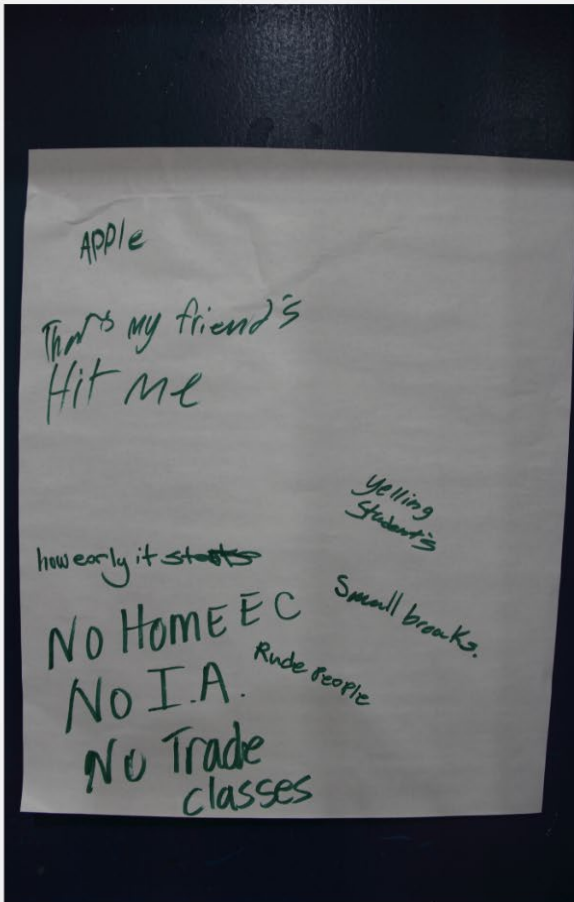
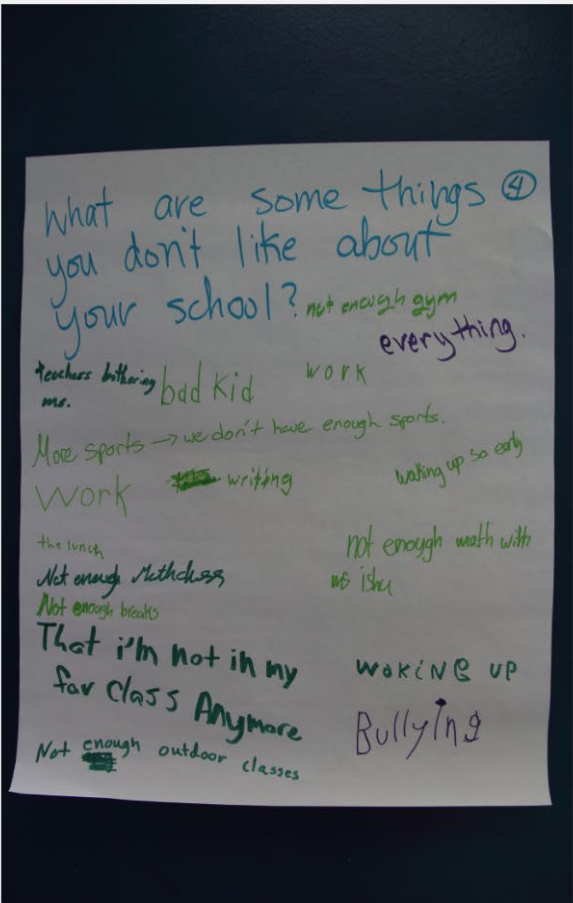
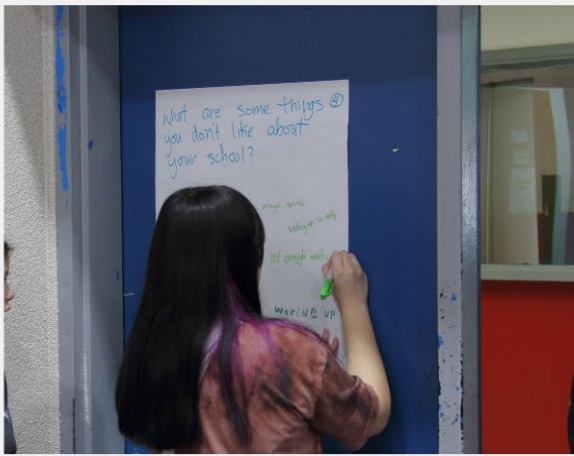
computer Science

- keyboarding
- advanced classes
- mechanics, cosmology, welding,
- Calculus - math
- Sewing - cultural / Beading
- Home Ec. - Star blankets, Jackets, Ribbons, skirts
- International Study / History
- Space Study - astronomy
- jobs / careers
- Driver's Ed.
- Theatre
- Survival Studies
- marine biology
- Music

- Land-Based Ed.
- Art - wallpainting / murals
- Dance - pow wow
- Boundaries - healthy, touch







If you could create the <sup>②</sup> worlds best school, what would it look like?

- No Homework
- Start @ 12 finish @ 7:30
- Animals (pets)
- Lots of Art
- Bigger Gym
- Bigger Library
- More technology
- Dr's, Nurses, Dentist,

- Mascot + <sup>School</sup> Pet (dog, cat, parrot, turtle) fish
- IA classes, woodwork classes.
- Hockey facility, work out place
- No bullies!
- Basketball Court
- Volleyball Court
- Canteen
- Art class
- Long breaks
- Cree class
- Gym class
- Automotive classes
- Auditorium
- Music class - violin, flute
- Three levels + elevator.
- Pool x 2
- Trampoline
- Tennis court
- Gym (big)
- Sports Academy
- Better Teachers!
- Free shoe/clothing program.
- Really big hockey rink
- More land based.

- More land based learning x2
- More field trips, water park, Winnipeg
- Carnival
- Free books for all!
- More snacks x2
- Longer gym class
- Sewing class, learn to make our clothes.
- Free Canteen
- More ART classes.
- Driver's Ed classes.
- Learn to cook classes.
- More breaks
- Longer lunch
- Cleaner air vents
- Exercise equipment
- Fixed up school
- Swimming pool
- Vending machines
- Track & Field
- Cleaner bathroom stall also that lock.
- Better teachers
- More staff

- Different classes for each kid group in different Learning Areas
- 2 hour lunch break
- More time to breaks
- Longer breaks x2
- Gym
- Relaxation/meditation room
- Naps
- Advanced art classes
- Engineering classes
- Awesome buses
- Less stricter schedules
- Bigger school.
- Being able to choose which education we want.
- More activities → water gun day
- More fun days.







