



Aanii Parents,

In partnership with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, SPRING Program, we will be holding talking circles once per month. The meetings will be divided into two sessions so that more students have an opportunity to participate based on their class schedules.

Talking circles are based on the sacred tradition of sharing circles. The purpose of these less formal talking circles, used as part of our Native Education Program, is to create a safe environment in which students can share their thoughts, feelings, or point of view with others. In a Talking Circle, each one is equal and each one belongs. Participants in a Talking Circle learn to listen and respect the views of others. The intention is to open hearts to understand and connect with one another.

- Participants sit in a circle. The circle symbolizes completeness.
- Ground rules include:
 - Everyone’s contribution is equally important.
 - State what you feel or believe starting with “I-statements,” e.g., “I feel ...”
- When the talking object is placed in someone’s hands; it is that person’s turn to share his or her thoughts, without interruption. The object is then passed to the next person in a clockwise direction.
- Whoever is holding the object has the right to speak and others have the responsibility to listen.
- Everyone else is listening in a nonjudgemental way to what the speaker is saying.
- Silence is an acceptable response. There must be no negative reactions to the phrase, “I pass.”
- Speakers should feel free to express themselves in any way that is comfortable; by sharing a story, a personal experience, by using examples or metaphors, and so on.

Miigwech,

Alicia Schlehuber
Special Populations Coordinator
Public Schools of Petoskey

I would like my child _____ to participate in the
PRINT NAME

Native Education Talking Circles which are being co-facilitated by the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians SPRING Program staff. I understand these are held one time per month and attendance or participation is encouraged but not required.

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE