

Niji Mahkwa School

Community Report 2025 – 2026



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

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Mission Statement

Niji Mahkwa School and Community upholds the belief that all children have an inherent right to the highest quality of holistic education. The integration of traditional, cultural teachings in a supportive learning environment will provide students with strengths and skills to meet the challenges of life.

School Profile

The school ranges from grades N to 8 on site and grades 8 – 12 in the Songide'ewin program.

The staff is structured in the following teams: Cultural/Linguistic, Academic, Support, Songide'ewin, and our Shops program.

We facilitate the Four Directions Program, which consists of blended and integrated programming in the areas Academic, Cultural, Linguistic and Technology. The importance of each area is considered equally significant to a child's learning process. Math and Science will be the focus for teacher and classroom work in professional development and program enhancement.

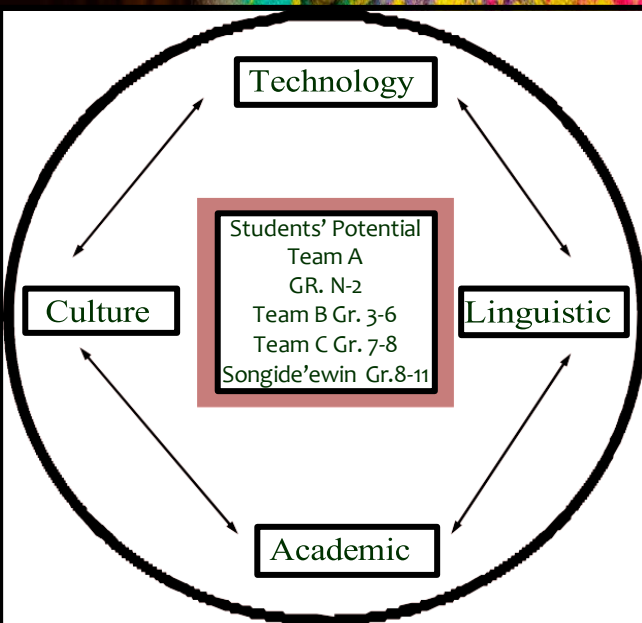
The Cultural/Linguistic team supports the classroom experience by providing children with the linguistic knowledge of a cultural way of life. The students are exposed to both Ininimowin and Anishinabemowin classes. The linguistic program implemented at Niji Mahkwa School was designed by the Ininew and Anishinabe teachers of our school in consultation with staff and parents.

Goals & Objectives

To collectively develop and maintain a safe environment that will nurture a student's self-worth, self-discipline, increased awareness of inner resources and stronger identity.

- ◆ To promote, develop and empower Family, Extended Family, Elders and Community members as equal partners with Rights and Responsibilities who will become Pro-active participants in the education of our children.
- ◆ To nurture respect for spiritual guides and teachers.
- ◆ To promote the seven teachings as adopted by Niji Mahkwa Parents, Community, Staff and Students: Knowledge, Honour, Courage, Honesty, Humility and Truth.
- ◆ To ensure the preservation, appreciation, and utilization of traditional languages by offering Cree and Ojibwe language instruction as compulsory subjects. Other languages may be offered.
- ◆ To promote a balanced lifestyle by incorporating cultural teachings to meet the students spiritual, emotional, physical and mental needs.

Niji Mahkwa School Structure



Working The Circle into the 21st Century

Niji Mahkwa School is guided by the Four Directions curriculum document that has been created in consultation with spiritual guides and teachers, staff, and parents. The diagram below illustrates that the programming is centered around the child's abilities and strengths. The four directions of programming at Niji Mahkwa identified on the circle have been developed into an educational framework based on objectives determined for each of these strands. In this way it is the intention of all involved in the educational process at Niji Mahkwa to maximize the learning opportunities and potential of each of the students.

The Sacred Grandfather's Teachings

- ◆ To Cherish knowledge is to know wisdom
- ◆ To know love is to find peace
- ◆ To honor all creation is to have respect
- ◆ Courage is to face life with integrity
- ◆ Honesty in facing a situation is to be brave
- ◆ Humility is to know yourself as a sacred part of creation
- ◆ Truth is to know all of these things



At Niji Mahkwa School, our commitment to our students, families and community is rooted in identity, care and academic growth. This past year, our focus centered on deeply integrating cultural reclamation with student success, fully aligning our daily practices with the Winnipeg School division's (WSD) framework of **joy, love and rigor**.

Cultivating Belonging and Well-Being

Love at Niji Mahkwa means removing barriers so every child can thrive. Recognizing that wellness is a prerequisite for learning, we provided **free breakfast and lunch daily** to all students. This nourished our community, ensured equitable access to education, and created a welcoming, family-style environment where students felt secure and cared for.

Rooted in Culture, Identity and Land

Our academic approach blends rigorous standards with traditional knowledge. **Land-based learning** took students beyond classroom walls, teaching them to read the land, understand sustainability, and connect deeply with the environment. Land-based activities include visiting the Naawi Oodena treaty 1 land, shoreline and ice fishing, animal and plant identification and gearing up our students to go outside during all 4 seasons. This experiential learning was woven alongside the reclamation of **Indigenous languages** and daily **ceremony**, grounding our students in their heritage, building immense pride and restoring cultural continuity. As always, everyone of our classrooms gets to first-hand understand the importance of ceremony and feast through our culture and language team. Language and culture is the key in what we do at Niji Mahkwa and is evident in all classrooms and in our halls.





Aligning with WSD's Framework

Our holistic approach breathes life into WSD's core values:

- **LOVE:** Demonstrated through our comprehensive nutrition program, restorative practices, and a community safe-haven.
- **JOY:** Found in the laughter shared during land-based outings, the pride of speaking ancestral languages, and the community built during school-wide ceremonies.
- **RIGOR:** Upheld by challenging our students to critical levels of thinking, connecting traditional teachings to modern scientific and linguistic frameworks and setting high expectations for academic achievement.

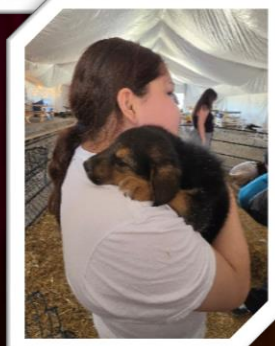
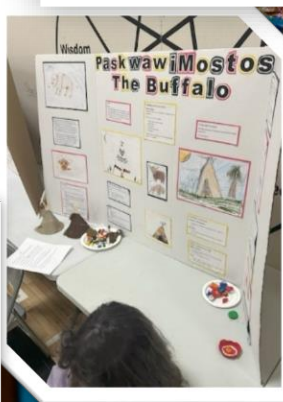
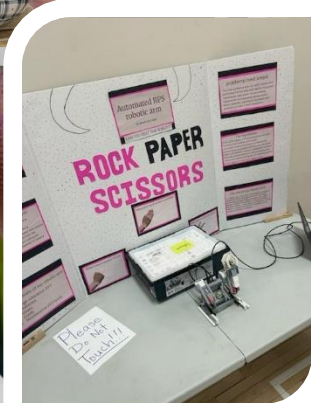
Chi-Miigwetch to our staff, Elders and families. Together, we are nurturing proud, resilient and academically accomplished future leaders.

School Activities and Celebrations

- Gummy Bear Olympics – An exciting June activity where student participate and engage in a series of challenges geared toward
- Winter Concert - Our yearly winter event where each class plans a performance for our parents, caregivers, and grandparents. It's always a heartwarming event as our kids work hard
- STEM Day – One of our exciting annual events for student learning. Student go to the University of Winnipeg to participate in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math learning for the day.
- Book Fair – Our students gathered in the library to peruse and purchase books for both their classroom libraries and their own collections. We are definitely doing again next year!
- Treaty Days – Every year, Niji Mahkwa recognizes the numbered treaties by having winter fun with planned activities in the snow.
- School Swimming Programs – We were very fortunate to have 2 different programs for our Niji students giving kids the opportunity to learn from certified swimming instructors.
- Remembrance Day/Indigenous Veterans Day – Our annual honoring of both Remembrance Day and Indigenous Veteran's Day. Indigenous veteran Doug Harney of the Aboriginal Veterans Association of Manitoba came to our school and spoke to our students about the importance of honoring those who served our country to preserve of freedom.
- Truth and Reconciliation Recognition – We recognize our shared history and the lasting impacts of Indian Residential Schools in Canada.
- Spirit Week – A weeklong celebration in March to get students engaged and excited before spring break.
- Halloween Week – A week of spooky, scary fun!
- Awards Day – In June, we gathered to give our students awards for their achievements for the year.
- Carnival Day – A celebration for the end of the school year at Niji Mahkwa, we planned a day with the kids with inflatables and games for all the students.




NIJIMAHKWA IN ACTION



School Covenant

- ◆ I have a right to be happy, to be treated with kindness at Niji Mahkwa.
This means that we will agree to live by the Smudge Prayer.
- ◆ I have a right to be myself at Niji Mahkwa.
This means that individual differences must be respected.
- ◆ I have a right to be safe at Niji Mahkwa.
This means that our minds, bodies, spirits and emotions will be protected.
- ◆ I have a right to hear and be heard at Niji Mahkwa.
This means that my opinions and wishes will be
- ◆ I have a right to learn about myself at Niji Mahkwa.
This means that I will be free to express my feelings, thoughts and gifts respectfully.



*The Staff, Students and
Parents of Niji Mahkwa
have committed to honor
the SEVEN TEACHINGS in
their relationship with each
other.*



Niji Mahkwa School
EACH CHILD IS A SACRED BEING

Principal: Mr. R. Boulette
Vice Principal: Ms. L. Dysart