Stage 4
Renewal and Negotiation

The time to seek solutions to Recognition, Respect, Responsibility and Sharing
*That the rare birth of a white buffalo on the Great Plains was considered a sacred event that represented hope, rebirth and unity for the tribes who depended on the buffalo for their sustenance. Many tribes have passed down legends that explain the symbolism of the white buffalo. The Alberta Teachers' Association has produced a Teachers' Resource Book entitled "Education is our Buffalo". The ATA used the white buffalo to show respect for Aboriginal history and culture in the hope that, as teachers become more familiar with Aboriginal culture, teachers can foster hope, rebirth and unity among Aboriginal students. This resource in its entirety is available on www.teachers.ab.ca—submit a search on 'Aboriginal Education'.

That June 21 is National Aboriginal Day


1990: Quebec legislature recognizes June 21 as a day to celebrate aboriginal culture.

1995: The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommends the designation of a National First Peoples Day. The Sacred Assembly, a national conference of aboriginal and non-aboriginal people chaired by Elijah Harper, calls for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

1996: June 13—Governor General Romeo LeBlanc declares June 21 as National Aboriginal Day after consultations with various aboriginal groups. The inaugural day is celebrated with events from coast to coast to coast.

For a National Aboriginal Day activity in schools, have a Bannock Making Contest - here's the recipe ...

Ingredients: 3 cups (750 ml) sifted flour; 1 tsp (5ml) salt; 1-2 tblsp (15-30 ml) baking powder; water; vegetable oil or lard

Method: Mix half of the flour with the remaining dry ingredients. Add water until the mixture becomes thick, like paper mache' paste. Add more flour until the dough feels like a soft earlobe. Heat the oil over medium-high heat until very hot but not smoking.

Aboriginal Day Information and more activity suggestions available at www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nad/ife/-eng.asp

* That if Natives began living on the Plains 11,500 years ago, and Europeans first saw the Canadian Plains less than 300 years ago, this means that more than 97% of Plains history is Native history alone. Imagine a textbook with ten chapters, with each chapter portraying an equal part of that history. The first nine chapters would be devoted to Native history, as would more than 70% of the final chapter. (Full Circle Canada's First Nations Steckley and Cummins, 2001, p. 91)
"Where are the Indians at?"

That was my first thought after moving to Hiawatha First Nation reserve from Saskatchewan. Honestly, it's my first time living on the rez [reservation/First Nation] after the years in the urban city. I never knew what it is like to live on the rez, probably living in the broken down shack with ugly mutts, including the cracked up cars. Just like back in Ochap rez. Actually, we do have our own school and plus the ski lodges. I was wrong. Hiawatha rez seems more beautiful than I thought. Mostly compared to Ochap rez. Hehe...nice lawns and lots of rich Indians living there, but few things they do not have like getting treaty money or earn the government money that you got on your 18th birthday—it depends on which reserves are.

Actually I came from Ochapowace/Chachacacas First Nations in Saskatchewan. My family is Plains Cree and a bit of this and that, including Métis. I do have my treaty status card, but sometimes I was annoyed when someone asks me about my number.

Most powwows in Saskatchewan are way different than in Ontario. I mean I never heard of the "Traditional" powwow. How could I dance for a whole day and end up getting $20 a day? Unless it was lots of fun. My friends in Hiawatha are unlike some of my crew from Ochap. Well... I do like Hiawatha better than Ochap, but I miss my family and friends there. I only see them a few times a year. It is brutal. Actually, they definitely remind me of the Bear kids back in Ochap, which are a little weird.

I learned about Ojibway culture, I never knew that a jingle dress is a medicine dress. Interesting huh? I am actually learning to speak their language slowly. I know, I know - I'm deaf but I can read lips and stuff like that. I just found out that my great grandmother was Ojibway. Okay, I know it seems awkward but Plains Cree are more like Dakota, I mean we can have any ceremonies especially the sun dance and a sweat lodge. My nohkum, (Grandmother in Cree), visited here in Ontario. She was surprised at first, but she accepted. I miss how she cooks and taught us about her life. It reminds me of how the lives are different. I've moved lots. I fell in love with Hiawatha rez. I really want to stay here for the whole of my life. I have great friends here. But I miss my old life back in Saskatchewan, especially hanging around with the people in Ochap rez. Huh...anyway I think that'll be interesting in the future for everyone especially me.

**Jordan is a KPRDSB Grade 11 student 2007-08**
Creating an inclusive curriculum/classroom involves reflecting and honouring diverse perspectives, experiences, skills and knowledge. Unfortunately, assumptions about what is 'normal,' what is generally known and even how we know what we know can get in the way of building learning environments that are equitable. We all have biases, shaped by our experiences, which affect our work as educators and school administrators. To alleviate the negative effects that assumptions and biases can have, it is helpful to reflect on our experiences and to examine the underlying thoughts, values and beliefs we carry. The following questions are included to assist in this regard.

**Self-Knowledge:**
1. What personal biases or interests shape my approach to this subject/lesson? Why do I have these biases/interests (consider experiences, beliefs, assumptions)?
2. What tools/processes do I use when I need to learn about something that is unfamiliar to me?
3. What assumptions do I make about learning and teaching?

**Educational Practise:**
1. What are my everyday practices that reflect care, concern and respect for diversity?
2. How do I ensure that students and colleagues have the confidence to regularly take risks by expressing opinions, asking questions or disagreeing?
3. Who are the students I am imagining as I am your planning? Who might you be leaving out?
4. Have I developed a strategy for knowing my students/colleagues and in particular, for identifying and building on the knowledge and strengths of students/colleagues?

**Learning Resources:**
1. Who is represented and in what ways? Who has been forgotten?
2. Are texts authentic, free of stereotyping and inaccuracies?
3. How do I ensure that the curriculum and choice of materials reflect diverse perspectives (eg. Inuit, Metis, First Nations) and that these perspectives depict current daily life in various contexts (eg. urban/rural/remote, including on and off reservation, local/global)