

## **SMUDGING/PIPE CEREMONIES**

### **Background**

The Division recognizes the spiritual needs of the Aboriginal community. The Division recognizes that smudging and the use of herbs and tobacco are a part of the Aboriginal traditional way of life and are, therefore, permitted in Division schools, subject to proper safety measures.

### **Definition**

Smudging is an Aboriginal tradition which involves the burning of sage, sweetgrass and/or cedar. Smudge produces a distinct odour, but the smoke associated with it is minimal and lasts a very short time. A smudge is burned to cleanse the body, mind, spirit of any bad feelings, negative thoughts, or negative energy - cleansing both physically and spiritually.

### **Procedures**

1. If smudging is to take place in a Division building, principals/supervisors must ensure staff understand the associated protocols and importance of smudging and pipe ceremonies as part of the Aboriginal traditional way of life.
2. If smudging is to take place in a Division building it will be in a designated area.
3. Any areas designated as smudging areas are to be in a well-ventilated area and approved by the Safety and Wellness Coordinator or designate.
4. Designated smudging areas must contain a fully charged fire extinguisher.
5. Staff responsible must be instructed on the use of fire extinguishers.
6. When smudging ceremonies are completed the materials must be fully extinguished and disposed of in an appropriate manner.
  - 6.1 Smoking or warm smudging materials need to burn out on their own.
  - 6.2 Smudge remnants and matches are to be placed in a tin can and saved.
  - 6.3 Smudge remnants are never to be placed in trash receptacle.
7. Tobacco is used in pipe ceremonies and only by a pipe carrier.

Adopted/Revised/Reviewed: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/JAN 2023

Reference: Section 52, 53, 197, 204, 222, 225 Education Act  
Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act  
Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Regulation  
Smoke-free Places Act