

Frontier School Division is committed to facilitating traditions of cultural importance to student success, including the practice of smudging. Smudging is a traditional practice common to many Indigenous Peoples and involves the burning of one or more traditional medicines harvested from the Earth including sage, cedar, sweetgrass and/or tobacco.

Frontier School Division acknowledges that smudging traditions are passed down through generations and there are variations on how a smudge may take place. Respect for all is the guiding principle of Indigenous traditions, and all participants are welcome. The Division also recognizes that smudging is always voluntary.

Adopted June 15-16, 2023		
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1. How to Smudge

A smudge is led by a person who understands what a smudge is and why it is done. This individual is often an Elder/Knowledge Keeper or traditional helper, or it can be a knowledgeable staff person or student who feels comfortable leading the smudge.

When introducing the tradition of smudging for the first time, it is best to invite an Elder/Knowledge Keeper or traditional helper who can explain the practice, the medicines, protocols and the teachings that support smudging.

When the leader and group is ready to smudge, a small amount of sage is rolled into a ball and placed in a non-combustible smudge container (e.g. a shell, a ceramic stone/bowl, or small cast iron frying pan). The sage is lit, preferably with a wooden match. The person who lights the smudge is either the first or last to smudge, depending on the community's traditions and teachings. Note: Sage is chosen as the most suitable medicine to be used by all with no restrictions. Thus, increasing inclusivity of those who can join/attend the smudge.

One way of smudging is to first cleanse your hands with the smoke, like washing your hands. Then draw the smoke with both hands over your head, eyes, ears, mouth and body. These actions remind us to think good thoughts, see the world in a good way, to hear good words, speak positively, reach out to others in a good way and to walk gently upon the Earth.

Smudging should be inclusive but no one should feel pressured to participate. Should someone choose to be part of the group, but not wish to smudge, they may simply touch the bowl, say "thank you", and the smudge will move to the next person. They may also choose not to be part of the smudging group.

At the end of the smudge, the sage should be allowed to burn out naturally. When the ashes are no longer smouldering, they should be returned to the Earth, where no one will step on them. If the ashes cannot be returned to the Earth immediately, please keep the ashes in a non-combustible smudge container on a non-combustible stand.

2. Health and Safety

Appropriate spaces for smudging must follow Workplace Safety and Health protocols that allow for sufficient ventilation. This may be a classroom, office or a gym with proper ventilation.

3. Notification

Parents/guardians, staff and students should be given notice at the beginning of the year about smudging protocols and spaces.

Communicating with parents/guardians, staff and students should be an ongoing process. Principals and/or Supervisors should allow parents/guardians and staff to ask questions about smudging, express their feelings, and continue to educate and inform. Ensure students who smudge have parent/guardian permission by using Exhibit C.2.M-EX1 Smudging Participation Consent Form.

Information: [Policy C.2.G – Workplace Safety and Health](#)
[Manitoba Indigenous Inclusion Directorate Smudging Protocol and Guidelines for School Divisions \(2019\)](#)

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SMUDGING PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

Exhibit C.2.M-EX1

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Throughout the year students will have opportunities to participate in a tradition called smudging, which is common to many Indigenous people and widely practiced in public schools. Smudging can be done as a daily activity to bring about a sense of grounding, direction and connection, at the start of events or at the request of students or staff.

Smudging involves the burning of one or more medicines from the Earth (sage will be the most commonly used). When participating in smudging, the actions remind us to think good thoughts, see good actions, hear good sounds, speak good words, and see the good in ourselves.

Smudging is always voluntary. Everyone is welcome to participate.

Frontier School Division will follow the smudging protocols outlined by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning. Please contact your School Principal if you have any questions.

Please complete and return this form to the School as soon as possible. This information will be kept on file for reference throughout the school year.

Student Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

___ I CONSENT to my child participating in smudging.

___ I DO NOT CONSENT to my child participating in smudging.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Note: Should circumstances change during the school year, you may change your consent at any time by contacting the School Principal in writing.

Information: [Manitoba Indigenous Inclusion Directorate Smudging Protocol and Guidelines for School Divisions \(2019\)](#)

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