

Subject: OSTU News
From: OSTU President <lp67@bctf.ca>
Date: 5/23/2023, 11:21 AM
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OSTU News

#15 – May 2023



Please join us at the Lakeside on
Monday, June 5th for the

OSTU Retirement Dinner.

The dinner is free for all OSTU
members, but you need to sign-up in
advance.

TODAY IS THE FINAL DAY
TO SIGN UP!

Register below.

Retirement dinner sign-up

Know Your Collective Agreement - Post and Fill

It's that time of year again when teachers prepare for Spring Staffing and are watching the job postings. The language in our Collective Agreement around post-and-fill is nuanced and complex. So much so that it can't be condensed it into one newsletter article. But here's a snippet that may interest you...

Order of priority for filling vacancies (Article E.21)

- Reassignment of continuing staff within a school, including those returning from leave.
- Continuing teachers returning to the district from leave, and continuing teachers requesting transfer (E.24) or being transferred (E.23).
- Teachers entitled to recall due to Seniority.
- Part-time continuing teachers requesting an increase.
- Temporary teachers.
- All other applicants.



Celebrating community identity

By Ashley Aoki (teacher, grateful to be living, playing, learning, and working as a teacher and guest on the food blog, unceded, ancestral territory of the Okanagan cycle's peoples, and in particular the Penikese Indian Band)

UNTIL RECENTLY, I didn't quite understand my assignments for my learning community. The first asked my students to learn about who they are in relation to their names. Regarding that some of my learners might not have access to all of the stories about their names, including the answer to "Why were you given this name...?" I chose to present our team questions such as, "What do you like about your name?" "What are three important facts about your name?" and "What does your name mean?" Several of these questions could be answered by researching online, and many learners chose to extend their research by working on the assignment at home with their families.

During the first phase of the project, Berny Lynn Dawson, Indigenous literacy support teacher, joined our class regularly to share a variety of stories authored by Indigenous and/or BIPOC, people that connected to our name project. For example, she shared her name, *Wagwag* (a coyote story), *The Name Jar* (a Korean story), and *I Like Who I Am* (a Malawian story) with the class. Learners shared reflections and posed questions about each author and the stories. The questions were written down and answered in follow-up lessons.

Berny Lynn also shared important information about the authors, including what lands they were from and the stories of who they are. She reminded us that a person's context (and story) matters and influenced the stories that they share with their audience. Through each story shared, learners deepened their understanding about their own story and the stories that exist within

First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning requires the exploration of one's identity."

The second activity invited students to learn more about their cultural identity because they had spent quite a bit of time learning about their name, and I had learned that their last name was often connected to a country of origin. Unless the spelling of the last name changed, learners researched questions about their family's countries of origin, learned facts about the types of meals that are typically eaten, and shared what makes their cultural backgrounds unique. When the second activity was complete, students wrote the two activities together in a formal piece of writing titled "All About Me."

To display the social, I wanted to visually represent each learner's cultural roots. It would become my "learning point" when discussing the curriculum why people are geographically and the curriculum as a First Peoples Principle of Learning that have been affected by settlement and colonization. I designed the display with social attention to each child's identity. The photos were taken on Orange Day and placed around the outside of the table. A piece of string connected them to one of the countries named in their picture. This display has been outside of our classroom for a couple of months now, and other visitors stop and ask questions about the display such as, "What country is that?" Some students will look at the pictures and trace the string back to the student's country of origin. I saw that this learning display generated wonder and connects learners in my class to the broader school community.

After spending over four months on this project, I knew I wanted to create time for learners to celebrate who they are and what they learned. I suggested that on Orange Day, we hold a cultural celebration, and each person could bring in a dish that connected to their cultural identity. When I brought the idea forward, one of the students reacted to it and said, "I've done it."

It was a perfect request to celebrate the unique and beautiful cultures in our community. On February 14, 2023, food that connected to the children's cultural identity was brought in. Everything from waffles, egg tarts, kajiao porridge, and more. My parents joined us and several of the students made Japanese rice balls, which is a special recipe that connects to a tradition shared by my late Grandpa Aoki.

After our cultural celebration, I asked families to email me the recipes that were brought in. I have all the recipes together into a cultural celebration cookbook. At the end of the cookbook, I have a photo of each child and created a mosaic of photos, which is now the end page of our book. A comprehensive wrap-up for an even more memorable project, tying each of us together while celebrating the uniqueness we bring to the community.



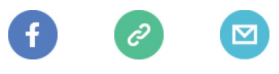

About the author
Ashley Aoki (author) is an elementary educator in School District 67 (Okanagan Valley). She holds a graduate degree in Literacy and Language Arts from the University of Victoria and is in the process of completing her Educational Leadership Certificate from Omineca University. She has published with Ashley's First Peoples Principle of Learning: Connections and her modernized side story's Elders' generation (Kamayan, Kamayan and Kamayan).

Check it out! One of our teachers has an article in the Teacher magazine!

[Read the full article here](#)

Each person who emails me at lp67@bctf.ca will be entered into a draw to WIN a prize. Email me before May 26 at 4:00.

BUT... you have to name the lasagna-loving cat at the top of the newsletter.



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