

ELDER GUIDELINES

There is no one definition of an Elder. Each person defines and chooses their own Elder. It is important that everyone respects and honors all Elders.

Procedures

1. Consideration should be given to involving the Elder in a meaningful way in the entire meeting or event as feasible.
2. Each person extending an invitation to an Elder is responsible for personally contacting the Elder prior to the event/meeting to ensure:
 - 2.1 Proper protocol is followed, understanding it may be different for each Elder.
 - 2.2 The Elder is aware of and understands all details of the event/meeting.
 - 2.3 Ensure the Elder is aware of and understands all the logistics such as travel, lodging, billing/payment, etc.
3. The Northland First Nations, Metis & Inuit Education staff will provide support, if requested, to Trustees and other staff with regard to inviting an Elder to a Ward Council or Board meeting, Division or Area event/meeting to help ensure proper protocol is followed.
4. The Northland First Nation, Metis & Inuit Education will provide support to schools if requested with regard to inviting an Elder to school events/meetings to help ensure proper protocol is followed.
5. Selecting an Elder(s):
 - 5.1 Generally, Elders will be selected from within the Northland School Division however an Elder may be selected from outside of Northland School Division in special circumstances and in consideration of budget implications.
 - 5.2 **BOARD and DISTRICT EVENTS/MEETINGS:**
 - 5.2.1 In consultation with the Board Chair, the Northland First Nation, Metis & Inuit Education staff shall ensure Elders, if any, are chosen from across the Division in an equitable manner.
 - 5.2.2 The Northland First Nation, Metis & Inuit Education staff will consult with the trustee of the ward the Elder is to be chosen from.
 - 5.3 **WARD COUNCIL MEETINGS:**
 - 5.3.1 The Board is responsible for the appointment of Elders, if any, by motion to a ward council meeting.
 - 5.3.2 The selection of Elders shall be done by each trustee on a rotational basis with due consideration given to the number of communities in a ward.
 - 5.4 **AREA EVENTS/MEETINGS:**

- 5.4.1 The Associate Superintendent shall ensure Elders, if any, are chosen from across the area in an equitable manner.
- 5.4.2 The Associate Superintendent will work with the Northland First Nation, Metis & Inuit Education staff and Trustee of the community(s) and their Elders.
- 5.5 **SCHOOL EVENTS/MEETINGS (including school councils):**
 - 5.5.1 The principal is responsible for ensuring there is a selection process for the choosing of Elders, if any, for school events.
 - 5.5.2 The school council chair in consultation with the principal shall set up a process for selection of an Elder, if any, for school council meetings.
- 6. Compensation:
 - 6.1 When an Elder is officially invited or appointed by Board motion to take part in a Ward Council meeting, Board, Division and/or Area event/meeting their expenses shall be paid and they shall receive honoraria for the event/meeting.
 - 6.1.1 Their expenses shall be paid as per Policy 7, Appendix A Schedule of Rates.
 - 6.1.2 Honoraria rate shall be \$200 for each day, or partial day, of attendance at an event/meeting.
 - 6.1.3 Payment of honoraria and expense to Elders for Ward Council meetings, Board, Division and Area events/meetings shall be from the central budget.
 - 6.2 The principal shall be responsible for the procedures and payment of honoraria and expenses to Elders, if any, for school events.
 - 6.2.1 Payment of honoraria and expenses for school events shall be from school budgets.
- 7. See also Administrative Procedure 155 Appendix - Indigenous Customs and Protocol.

The following article is but one description of an Elder. What does it take to be an Elder?

An Elder is thoughtful, strong and also compassionate. An Elder condemns all kinds of violence and abuse, not just those kinds that it is convenient for them to condemn. An Elder stands up for the weak and speaks truth to power.

An Elder is not perfect, but neither is he or she a hypocrite. An Elder recognizes that his or her strength comes from a long line of ancestors and their accumulated wisdom. An Elder is always learning.

An Elder is somebody you can expect a “fair go” from. An Elder will not attack you when you least expect it. Instead, an Elder will stand up for you when you most need it.

An Elder will definitely not take responsibility for you, but will encourage you to take responsibility for yourself and stand alongside you while you try.

An Elder knows that true dignity comes from within and that nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent. An Elder is slow to judge, but fierce in his or her defence of the oppressed.

An Elder understands that our history of colonisation has left many of us hurting and afraid. An Elder will not manipulate our hurt and fear, but will help us to see that we can overcome it together.

An Elder has a vision for a better and more peaceful community. An Elder lives in such a way to make this community happen.

Elders do not tolerate the abuse of any man, woman or children in their community. EVER.

Are you an Elder? Or are you just old?