

February 8, 2018

Re: Requesting an Elder

The First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Support Team have put together the following information as a guideline for our schools to follow when requesting an Elder. While you may understand the teachings used in one territory, please be aware that we work to follow the teachings of the Elder being requested.

There are certain teachings that need to be understood before making a request for an Elder. In order to build and maintain strong relationships with Elders the following should be adhered to:

- All requests for Elders must go through the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Support Team. This helps to ensure that all requests are made in an appropriate way that is consistent with the Elders culture and/or ways of being.
- Protocol is presented to the Elder when asking them for their time. Most Elders accept tobacco when you ask them to share their knowledge. However, this is not true for everyone. Elders have diverse teachings, so please inquire during initial meeting. Please note that it is very important to be specific in making your request. If the Elder accepts the tobacco, they are accepting the request and will do their best to help you. If they cannot do what you are asking, they will say so and not accept the tobacco.
- Elders receive an honorarium for their time. The honorarium is \$50 per hour, up to \$200 per day. There are certain circumstances in which the honorarium might be higher. For example, some ceremonies will require more preparation time and/or travel time. The First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Support Team will supplement honorarium up to \$100 for first request only. Anything above the \$100 will be the school's responsibility.

- If you are meeting with an Elder be sure to leave plenty of time because it is up to the Elder when the meeting is finished. That being said, the Elders do understand the way the modern world works and do take that into account. When you invite an Elder to your class, event, and/or meeting it is very important that you arrange to meet the Elder with a parking pass if needed. It is important that our Elders get to and from the class, event, and/or meeting without stress or worry.
- While the Elder receives an honorarium for their time it is common practice to give a small gift of appreciation for the knowledge that the Elder(s) is sharing. The gift could be a signed card of appreciation, a department-specific gift, a small blanket, something traditional from your own culture, or something that you have made. The gift is about reciprocity and thanks. If you require help please contact the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Support Team.
- Please be sure to have water and/or food available for the Elder depending on the length of time they will be with you.
- If you are inviting an Elder to an event with a meal be sure to serve the Elder first. Some Elders may want to serve themselves so it is best to ask.

We are here to support you in your Elder requests and will answer any questions you may have.

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Your First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Support Team