

Bridges Program Spotlight: Learning Through Indigenous Beading

The Bridges program was created to provide high school students who struggle in a traditional classroom setting an alternative to continue their educational journey. Each student in the program has an individual program created for them to meet their needs and desired path in life. The Bridges program is designed to meet students where they are academically, socially, and emotionally, while also creating opportunities for connection, engagement, and growth. Recently, students participated in an Indigenous beading experience led by Reid Bouvier, the division's Indigenous Learning Coach.

Through this hands-on experience, students learned foundational beading techniques while exploring the meaning of patterns, colours, and symbols within Indigenous traditions. Students described the experience in different ways; some enjoyed the creativity of what they could make, while others appreciated reconnecting with familiar people and trying something new.

The process encouraged patience, focus, and persistence. Some students found beading relaxing, while others experienced challenges as they learned new skills. For some, the experience created space to slow down and engage in a careful, hands-on process. For others, it provided an opportunity to reconnect with, share, and take pride in their culture. The work produced reflects both skill development and personal expression, with each piece representing individual creativity while honouring the teachings shared during the sessions.

