

To: The Parent/Guardian(s) of 6th Grade students at Dakota Meadows Middle School
From: Samantha Maranell, Education Director, Greater Mankato Diversity Council

Hello 6th Grade Families!

Throughout the month of October, 6th Grade classrooms within the Mankato Area Public School district will be participating in a Promoting Respect Workshop facilitated by the Greater Mankato Diversity Council (GMDC). Your student's lesson will be on either **Monday, October 19th; Tuesday, October 20th; or Wednesday, October 21st.**

GMDC's Promoting Respect Workshops have been implemented in public and private schools for the last 20 years. GMDC is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating an inclusive and welcoming community through education and celebration.

The Grade 6 Promoting Respect Workshop is "**Stronger Together: We Are Mankato.**" Students will learn about how people have come to live in the Mankato area throughout history. We'll focus on understanding and defining immigrant, refugee, and Native.

During the lesson, students will be invited to share where their ancestors or family originally came from, if they know it. This is simply to help students understand how many different stories and backgrounds make up our community. **We will not ask about or record anyone's current immigration status or documentation.**

The curriculum has been reviewed by and is supported by your school's principal as well as the Director of Teaching & Learning for ISD77. Members of the Greater Mankato community have been trained to present this session in alignment with the following Minnesota State Academic Standards:

1. Students will construct a narrative about why and how people have migrated to Minnesota as a result of warfare and/or genocide since 1960. (MN Studies 6.4.21.2)
2. Students will examine the history and memory of migration and immigration in Minnesota during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including the impact of immigration on Indigenous people. (MN Studies 6.4.22.2)
3. Students will demonstrate awareness of and empathy for individuals, their emotions, experiences and perspectives through a cross-cultural lens. (MN SEL: Social Awareness Competency: Learning Goal 1)
4. Students will describe ways that communities and cultures are similar and different. (MN SEL: Social Awareness Competency: Learning Goal 2)

The session aims to empower students with critical thinking skills to become engaged, empathetic, and informed members of a diverse community. It is designed to help students recognize their own unique qualities and appreciate the unique qualities of others; it is not about changing anyone's values or beliefs. GMDC's mission is to cultivate awareness, foster connections, and strengthen our vibrant and diverse community through education.

We encourage you to talk with your student about what they learned in their workshop and how they can help make our community a welcoming place for everyone. Here are some ideas for discussion:

1. Did you learn anything new about the history of Mankato?
2. What are some reasons people might come to the United States from other countries?
3. What are some ways you could help make life easier for people who are new to the U.S. or your school?

More information about the Greater Mankato Diversity Council is available on our website: www.mankatodiversity.org. You may contact me at samantha@mankatodiversity.org.

If for any reason you do not want your student to participate in the GMDC Promoting Respect Workshop, please contact your school's principal.