



Weaving Tradition with Technology



KiHS T4

Newsletter 2019~2020

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Message from the KiHS Principal

Angela Batsford-Mermans, KiHS Principal

Booshoo! Waachiye! Aainii!

We are in our final term of the 2019/2020 school year. It will definitely be a term to remember. For the first time ever, all of our students and staff are working from home. Classrooms and communities are closed, and social gatherings are prohibited. Nonetheless, we have continued on as best as we can during this time and have made modifications to keep our education program going.

The great news about being an online school is that we will still be having our graduation to acknowledge all of the hard work of the graduates. We have always had a virtual graduation in the past, and this year we will continue with this tradition, but with a few minor adjustments to ensure that we all remain safe. This will be a graduation year to remember!

Our staff are looking forward to the graduation because we miss seeing everyone and working directly with students. Even if you are not graduating, please join in to the online graduation to recognize this year's graduates.

We are hopeful to re-open our classrooms at the end of August to welcome in the new school year. See you then!

Angela



Graduating During Covid-19

Reina Boyce, Webequie First Nation, Class of 2020

Trying to get my last credit was difficult. I was doing MBF3CD, and I am not very good at math, but I tried anyway. It was hard to work at home: I felt like I had more concentration in the classroom. It was also difficult to try to find the time to work on my assignments while trying to entertain my daughter at the same time. I am a single mother, and my daughter is one-and-a-half. Some days I would do my work while she would be beside me, but she would need a lot of attention at times; some days I would do my work at nights when she would be sleeping - I would work on my assignments from 11pm to 1am.

There were days that I felt like giving up because of how much I didn't understand. I almost gave up on my course once, but my mentor and my family didn't let me give up and I'm very grateful to them for motivating me to keep going. I didn't believe in myself but other people did. Now here I am, in the class of 2020. That hard work really did pay off!

I wish I had the graduation I wanted, but I feel like it was cut off because of the pandemic that is still happening. I am still very proud of myself though.

This year I am graduating! It was hard in the end, but I did it !



Mashkihkiwaapo anihshininiwi-mashkihki

Instructions



18L tiwahkihk

Fill with cold, clean water. Filtered water is the best! Set on medium heat to bring to boil



How much?

3-4 wiikenh, a handful of kiishakaatikoon, and 4-6 leaves of kakikepakoon



Simmer

Bring to boil to simmer for 20 mins on medium heat. Let it cool down for awhile.



Straining

Use a strainer and strain into clean sterilized mason jars or any other containers

Mashkihkinan



Kakikepakoon

Used for sore throats, chest congestion, coughs, lung infection, and joint and muscle pains. Among other ailments.



Wiikenh

used for colds, fever, bronchitis, to treat wounds, and a stimulant to boost your energy



kiishakaatikoon

It stimulates the immune system, loaded with Vitamin C, anti-inflammatory agent, and helps with lung congestion.



Storing

When harvesting these medicines. Prepare by drying to remove moisture then store these plants into containers and store.



When you are feeling ill or you know you are getting sick.

Drink a cup of masshiwaapoon a day

Simply, heat up a cup and enjoy. Stay safe!



The Month Before Grad

'Twas the month before grad
And all through the town
The students worked hard
But they seemed a bit down.

What will grad be like?
Without a big celebration?
Will people even know
They've had more education?

The teachers made calls
They sent emails and letters
They got laptops and iPads
They made K.i.H.S. sweaters.

They made the certificates
They all did their best
They arranged the speakers
And then one final test.

Will the internet work?
The com techs work hard
To test all the devices
For grad in the backyard.

Will the internet work?
The students all wonder
So we can share our success
From here to Bay Thunder?

Will the internet work?
So the students can attend
The best VIRTUAL grad
From beginning to end?

The internet WILL work
We will see grads in their caps
We will hear words of hope
And then everyone claps.

The internet WILL work
So the families can see
The best REAL grads
In the whole country!

Congratulations, dear grads.
You've come a LONG way
This VIRTUAL grad
Will make your special day.



Indspire Trip for Nibinamik Students

Maureen Wainwright, Nibinamik Teacher-Mentor

In early March of 2020, a group of fourteen past, present and future KiHS students travelled from Nibinamik to Ottawa to attend the annual Indspire Empowering Youth Gathering. They were accompanied by three community chaperones; Jessica, a Ryerson student; and Maureen, KiHS mentor in Nibinamik. The group participated in a myriad of fun and educational activities. Thank you to KiHS and Nibinamik Choose Life Program. Below are a few pictures from our trip.



1. Mercedes, Isabel, Saggius, Bessie, Cherise and Farrah camped out at the Billy Bishop Airport on Toronto Island, waiting to take the last leg of our journey to Ottawa. It takes three flights to get from Summer Beaver to Ottawa. That's a lot of flying in one day.



2. This is a picture of Blaine Jacob and his Grandma Victoria Wabasse in front of the very touristy OTTAWA sign in the "market" in downtown Ottawa. So happy that both Blaine and Victoria came on the trip with us.



3. Dr. James Makokis and his partner Anthony Johnson (from Amazing Race Canada fame) were presenters at the Indspire Conference. It was "amazing" to hear their stories and what they hoped for us.



4. During the morning break-out activities, Troyden visited the Let's Talk Science Virtual Reality booth.



5. First Nation performance artist Cody Coyote spoke to the Gathering during lunch.



6. After lunch, Lancel got to meet and talk one-on-one with Cody.

Indspire Trip for Nibinamik Students (Cont'd)



7. At the Senators Game - Bessie and Troyden during the pre-game skate. What a great night! Thank you to Brent Cartwright and the Ottawa Senators for the awesome seats!



8. A quick stop at the ophthalmologist's store. Blaine is modelling his new glasses. Thanks Dr. Sally Abear!



9. We were invited to visit Immaculata High School – an OCSB school – and were welcomed into one of their tech (computer) labs and their Indigenous Space. This is a picture of Paul Oskineegish teaching about the drum.



10. All gathered around the drum. This was an opportunity for us to center ourselves. Thank you to Immaculata for creating this "space" for us.



11. This is a picture of Blaine, Lancel, Troyden, Bessie, and Farrah standing against the mural outside the Mamidosew-in Centre at Algonquin College - the next stop on a whirlwind tour of Ottawa.



12. Indian Tacos – what we were served for dinner at the Algonquin International Restaurant – loads and loads of Indians Tacos. They were as delicious as they looked. Thanks to Cathy Dewar and her team.



13. Time for a quick post dinner nap. Chaperoning is hard work, especially on a full stomach!



14 The Indspire Awards at the National Arts Centre – what an incredible venue! The Indspire Awards will be broadcast on APTN, CBC, CBC Radio, and CBC GEM on Sunday, June 21, 2020 at 8:00pm / 8:30pm NT. If you tune in you will hear us cheering on some truly inspiring individuals.



15. At the Ottawa Airport early Saturday, shopping in tow, checking our social media feeds and readying ourselves to head back to Summer Beaver.

Land Based Learning Update

Becca Letkeman, Land-Based Learning Lead

The past few months have been so unexpected! I think we've all seen how capable we are of adapting our personal routines despite challenges and anxieties surrounding Covid-19. I was amazed at how fast the landscape of our lives changed when the pandemic was announced and services started closing in early March. KiHS has remained open and as staff we've been able to work from home. I have been very grateful for this.

Unfortunately we had to postpone a few awesome plans we had in place for spring. These included a fishing trip in Weagamow First Nation, the KOBE Indigenous Games in Fort Severn, a May visit to Poplar Hill, a class I





Land Based Learning Update (Cont'd)

Becca Letkeman, Land-Based Learning Lead

was going to attend on basket making with red osier dogwood, and also a staff canoe trip. Hopefully these things will all happen in fall or next year!

In the meantime I've been working with Kathleen and KiHS teachers to include some land-based learning in the course curriculum. An example of these changes is Grade 10 math, where the culminating activity will include spending time in the forest. Students will bring together mathematical skills to determine things like tree diameter and volume. They will learn the names of tree species and their unique identifiers, as well as talking to an Elder about the significance of the forest to their Community. A shout-out to math teacher Ian Vaithilingham who spent a lot of effort and time on this transformation!

April 22nd was Earth Day and we celebrated the land's many gifts by reflecting on why we love the land:

Ojibway: ninzhawendaan aki, ozaam...

Ojicree: ochi sakihtataan aski osaam...

Cree: kekwaan ohci saakihtatayaan askiy...

It's been helpful to get out into the bush for rest and rejuvenation in the middle of quarantine. Right now I have a prospector tent set up in the backyard for needed tea-times. I have enjoyed seeing your pictures on facebook - many people are out on the land hunting, fishing and collecting medicines. Have a great summer and see you in the fall!



Special deliveries

Mary Ann, Sachigo Teacher-Mentor

Hello from Sachigo Lake!

Seen here are two special deliveries I made to my students in Sachigo Lake to lift their spirits during this Covid-19 pandemic. The first was a visit from the Easter Bunny (me) to bring all the KIHS households chocolates with their final Term 3 report cards. The second was a care package of healthy food items delivered to KIHS students with their Term 4 midterm reports!

When I saw each of my students, it brought a big smile to their faces and mine, because we had a moment to do a wellness check-in and catch up face-to-face. I will really miss them over the summer until I see them again in September!

I hope everyone reading this has a safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne Barrett (the Sachigo Lake classroom mentor)





KiHS Celebrates 30 Graduates Online

Albee Eisbrenner, KiHS Graduation Coach

Keewaytinook Internet High School (KiHS) had all the resources to continue online classes during the pandemic and this year's students rose to the occasion! Determined to graduate, students logged in from home with the support of their families, communities, and teaching staff. The class of 2020 will go down in history as the ones who were resilient enough to still cross the finish line during the global pandemic. The online ceremony featured congratulatory speeches from dignitaries, a performance by Thunder Bay based singer Nick Sherman, a keynote speaker Jacky Chan who holds a third degree black belt and is a graduate of the Master of Education for Change program at Lakehead University, a valedictorian speech from Kobe Potan-Benson(Weagamow), and heartfelt congratulations from mentors.

If you missed the ceremony live, you can watch it from the KiHS / Keewaytinook Internet High School Facebook page or from the link below:

Click This Button

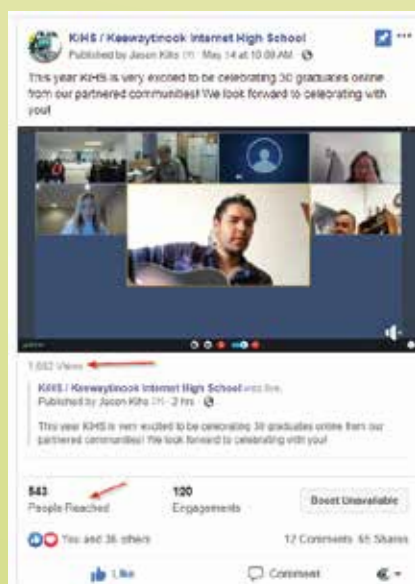
It was evident that KiHS staff are passionate about the students' success and well-being through all of the high quality content streamed throughout the ceremony. It is truly a blessing to work with so many amazing people. Parents and community members had nothing but good things to say about the 2020 KiHS graduation ceremony. There were even newspaper reporters who watched the ceremony online and wanted to interview our grads! Despite the large scale of this year's graduation we were still able to keep the wheels on the train!





KiHS Celebrates 30 Graduates Online (Cont'd)

Albee Eisbrenner, KiHS Graduation Coach



Congratulations
2020
KiHS
Graduation Ceremony



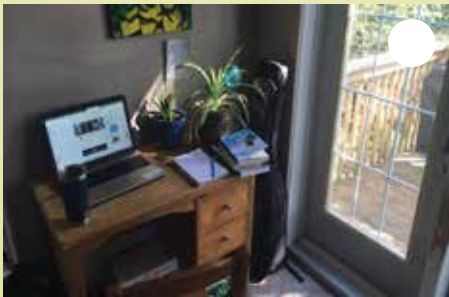


Guess the Desk

KiHS staff have been working from home for over two months now!

Can you guess whose desk is whose?

- | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1) Albee | 2) Angela | 3) Anita | 4) Becca | 5) Cathy | 6) Ian |
| 7) Kathleen | 8) Jason | 9) Krystyna | 10) Lorne | 11) Luc | 12) Melissa |
| 13) Sally | 14) Sang | 15) Thomas | | | |





Working from Home

Ian Vaithilingam, Mattagami Teacher-Mentor

I'm not sure if it felt like this for you, but March and April felt more like years than months to me. Like all of our communities, we've been locked down with social and travel restrictions due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our physical classroom has been closed, but we've been supporting each other as best we can online. My work desk for the past several weeks has been my kitchen table.

While Mattagami Chief and Council – as well as our volunteer Fire Department – have done a fantastic job keeping our community safe, the lockdown has not been without its challenges for me. I miss my students. I miss the structure and routine of the classroom. I didn't realize how nice it was to get out the door every morning, and just... have somewhere to be.

Working from home hasn't been easy – I know our students feel the same way. There are so many more distractions. Time is just weird, and my sleep schedule is off.

As difficult as the lockdown has been, there have been many positive things that have come out of it. I spent more time on professional development by taking an online teacher's course in First Nations history and culture. I paid more attention to reviewing and improving our online math courses for the coming years. I finally got the chance to better organize our new classroom space while it was empty.

Though social distancing is difficult for any close-knit community, the lovely folks in the Mattagami band office have helped keep spirits up by organizing fun community events like a window decorating contest and a scavenger hunt. They even delivered care packages full of food to every household.

On a personal level, I've rediscovered video games, found more time to play guitar, and started baking (though my "no baking soda" chocolate cake was a flop – literally). I finally downloaded TikTok (don't judge!), and in the process discovered many talented young Indigenous people making incredibly creative and hilarious videos.

My dog Cedar loves the lockdown because I'm home all the time – I sometimes wonder if he thinks I got fired from my job. We've gone snowshoeing together almost every day, and so I've been able to better familiarize myself with the beautiful land here at Mattagami.

Finally, I've reconnected with old friends in distant places that I haven't seen or heard from in years because video meetups are now more accepted.

The lockdown has helped me realize how often we take the little things for granted. As one of the many pandemic memes said, "In the rush to return to normal, use this time to consider what parts of normal are worth rushing back to."



Term 4, whew, what a strange one this was! It is so difficult to think of something significant to write about when there has been one major topic spreading around. Yet, so many things have changed in two months since Term 3 ended. It has been tough not being able to interact with students in a manner that we are accustomed to. However, I think this period really emphasizes what a teacher can do to support their students in other ways besides academics.

Amongst a negative and sometimes dire atmosphere, it is important to see the positives where they are.

I know Fort Severn's Educational Director Moses Kakekaspan has recently announced that April/May will be Cultural Program months. In addition to the online learning that the students are receiving, parents and family members have been encouraged to take their children out on the land for hunting and camping. On top of that, the community-issued travel ban specifically disallows non-community members into the community for hunting, amongst other non-essential activities. That means the kids are going to have the land to themselves for this spring goose hunt. And there is something beautiful in that.

For me, my situation could not be more different, but I have been trying to do what positives I can as well. I have been working from my apartment in Toronto, reviewing and marking courses, spending time with my partner, checking how many geese my students have been getting up in the North, and walking my dog, Kitsune (Kit). Despite being in the big city, there is little to do when you can't go out! So walking the dog is almost a blessing in this environment, because it gives you a worthwhile reason to go outside for a bit. To keep myself on my toes whilst being at home, I have taken up a challenge to do 150 push ups/day for 21 days. Any takers?

These days it is hard to tell what the next day will bring, but recognize positivity where it is!



"Kitsune" means fox in Japanese



Working from Home

Sally Anderson, Keewaywin Teacher-Mentor

Students in Keewaywin aren't letting classroom closures get in the way of their studies! They might not be able to go to school but they are still keeping up their spirits and working towards their high school diplomas. How are they staying motivated and well? Here are some of their tips!

- Keep the goal in mind! If you are working towards graduating, keep thinking about that when you're working on your courses
- Take the time to do some of the things you like such as video games or listening to music
- Try to stay organized
- Try to get enough sleep
- Try to eat well and not too much (especially junk food)
- Remember to ask for help if you need it
- Be kind to yourself

Charity has a new job cleaning at the nursing station. She is an essential worker now! Dinah needed some supplies for her math course so dropped by the KiHS classroom when the teacher was there preparing printed lessons (no closer than 2 meters, right? We laughed taking this picture!)

Gavin meets his teacher on video to talk about lessons and just to catch up.

Norman takes a few quiet minutes away from his family at home to try and get an activity done in his truck.

Peter and his family are in isolation because his mother just came back from Sioux Lookout. He still tries to get some assignments submitted!

Krystal manages to make studying at home look glamorous!

Skye takes a moment in the sun to think about her senior PLAR.



Working from Home (Cont'd)

Sally Anderson, Keewaywin Teacher-Mentor



Working from Home

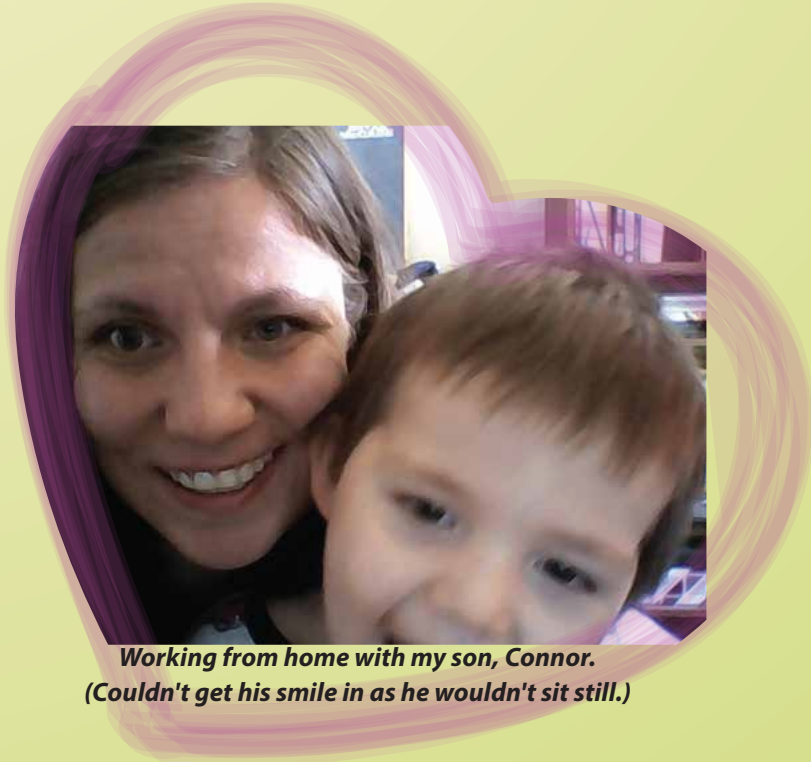
Tammy West, Mishkeegogamang Teacher-Mentor

Working from home has been a balancing act. As I type this my son is outside my office repeatedly asking, "Are you done yet?" He is three years old and doesn't understand the concept of time. He loves mom being home 24/7 but doesn't fully grasp that mom needs time to work. I also have two dogs who are normally walked around 1 o'clock every day of the week-end, not realizing that even though I am home it is a weekday and the walk is put on hold until late afternoon. For the first couple of weeks I was home, every time I slightly moved in the afternoon they would run to the door expecting me to walk them. Now, more or less, we have settled into a better routine and everyone is adjusting to the new schedule - even me.

Professionally, I have spent this time working from home revising my courses, marking and connecting with students via Facebook and the phone. One of the highlights of this time I have been able to complete a course titled, "First Nation, Métis and Inuit Peoples: Understanding Traditional Teachings, Histories, Current Issues and Culture," in the hopes of enriching my teaching practices and passing on my knowledge from the course to my students. I have gained knowledge about land claims, traditional practices such as ceremonies and dances, along with learning more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

It hasn't been all work for me as I have used some of this time to spend more time outdoors enjoying the sunshine and nature. One of the best things about living in a remote area of Northwestern Ontario is that the great outdoors is footsteps from my house. I miss my students and my daily interactions with them so from time to time I have driven to Mishkeegogamang and safely talked to community members from a distance. I will cherish this time I've been given at home as a way to reconnect with family and nature but do look forward to being back in the classroom and interacting with students on a daily basis.

Stay healthy. Stay safe!



During the pandemic, I've discovered the pros and cons of working from home. At first, it was something new and interesting thinking it would only last a couple of weeks. As time went on, the seriousness of the situation became more and more evident stressing the importance of staying at home.

As much as I missed the human to human contact with students and colleagues, I was always excited to receive activities that required grading from students. Maintaining a positive attitude, a regular schedule and a steady Pilates routine has proven to be beneficial in maintaining strong physical and mental health.

Congratulations to graduating students and I hope things get back to normal in September.

Here are some Pilates exercises.

ZIP UP

- A. Stand in Pilates V with hands on thighs.
B. Contract abs, rise to balls of feet, and zip arms up.



THE BUG

- A. Place feet hip distance apart; hinge forward.
B. Lift arms to sides with elbows bent. Hold one count.



PILATES LUNGE

- A. Stand with feet in Pilates V.
B. Lunge on a diagonal, pressing off floor to return.



FROG CRUNCH

- A. Lie with legs up, heels in Pilates V, knees bent to sides.
B. Crunch and exhale, squeezing thighs together and extending legs.





Working from Home

Thomas Choong, Bearskin Teacher-Mentor

First and foremost, let me begin by wishing all of you reading this - KiHS staff, students, and parents - good health and peace during these troublesome times. The world certainly has changed quickly in a short time, and I hope that you are all doing well, particularly in terms of your physical and mental health. This is a time where we all need to do what is best to keep each other safe, while taking care of ourselves as well.

In terms of KiHS – I miss my classroom in Bearskin Lake, and it's unfortunate that this year has not ended with the same level of anticipation of a typical school year, where we all push ourselves across the finish line towards a well-deserved break. This term certainly feels like it has been dragging on. For those of you students who have found the mental focus and dedication to commit yourselves to achieving this final term, I commend you. For those of you in Bearskin that needed the "voice of Tom" to help push you across the finish line – I shall return.

While missing my job and routine, I am blessed to be with my family during this time of uncertainty. My son Cayleb (who is 7) is an only child who misses his friends terribly. I am glad to be here with him to play, and make the best of this time. For all of you who live near the bush: the land has the ability to give us healing and strength. While keeping safe, I hope that you are taking time away from your screens (that you're on right now if you are reading this) to feel the breeze, listen to the waters, smell the emergence of spring (if it is coming for you), and enjoy the life that is growing around you. When I'm not sitting at my computer, I'm doing the best that I can to reflect on this period, accept the ways that it has changed the way I see the world, and be prepared for the new challenges that life has to offer when this crisis passes.

For those of you students who are graduating this year, my sincerest congratulations, and it's a shame that celebrations won't happen as we had hoped. However, don't ever forget how hard you've worked to accomplish this goal of yours, and how you should take credit and pride for not giving up and grinding it out to the end. Along with your family and friends, we, the staff of KiHS, are very proud of you.

To those of you who still have steps to take in your journey... we'll be right here to help guide you towards success.

Peace and blessings to all of you, and have a great summer.



Working from Home

Krystyna Villanueva-Gruszecka, Webequie Teacher-Mentor

In term 4, the KiHS Webequie classroom has faced challenges but we have also seen many successes and even been able to interact with each other at times. Laina Jacob and Jerome Rody completed the requirements to graduate high school at the end of term 3. Since the shut-downs and the start of term 4, we have had many other students getting closer to completing their requirements to graduate. How many graduates will we have in Webequie? We'll have to wait and see. During term 4, we have been able to see each other for brief moments when distributing food packages, delivering school work and supplies, and while out in the community. Another round of food packages will be given out before the end of the school year filled with healthy snacks and yummy fruit. It's always a pleasure to see students and to speak with them face-to-face despite social distancing measures. Many students have been interacting via instant messenger and that is another means of communication that brings us closer together. At this time, teachers are so very thankful for their students and I've received many thoughtful messages from thankful students as well. In this final term, many KiHS students are out on the land hunting geese for the community. I hope everyone is able to get enough food to feed their families and to share with others.





Working from Home

Raj Budhram, Weagamow Teacher-Mentor

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic during term 4 of 2020, I am working online from my home in Brampton, Ontario. Keewatinook Internet High School is an online school so my functions as an online teacher are quite easy. However, my function as the classroom mentor of Weagamow in an online environment is more challenging. Although I can effortlessly check the activities submitted by students and motivate students to do work, some of my functions - such as ensuring that students maximize their time and capabilities - are perplexing online, so I adapt and increase parental involvement to get me through this difficult time.

My day as an online teacher begins at 7:30 am and ends at 4:30 pm. During this time, I am available for interacting with any student and staff members of KIHS as well as parents and community members. At the same time, I do upgrades on my online courses; I conduct reviews of other teacher courses; I communicate with students, parents, and the Education Director of Weagamow via Facebook or phone; I perform any miscellaneous tasks assigned by the principal; and I do my regular reporting duties such as reporting on attendance and SAS reporting.

In term 4, there are several prospective graduates in Weagamow. It is quite inspiring to see how these graduates are working through the pandemic and are determined to graduate this year.

