

Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Student Support Worker Program

What is the Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Student Support Worker Program?

The primary role of the Student Support Worker is to work to promote a school climate that is safe, supportive, and respectful and that connects Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal descent students to a broad array of school and community resources. Student support workers are based in schools and work with the school staff and the home to support students' school success.

The Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Student Support Worker is to support students of Mi'kmaq ancestry/Aboriginal descent and their families, to make schooling a more positive experience, helping students achieve success and remain in school. They do this with the support of the school administration and staff, under the direction of the RCH Coordinator. They work as part of a team, which includes students, parents, principals, teachers, and support staff.

The Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Student Support Worker Program is part of the RCH Department in TCRSB. It was established across Nova Scotia in 2003 in response to a recommendation from "Increasing the Effectiveness of Service Delivery to Mi'kmaw Learners: Minister's response to the Project Report on The Mi'kmaq Services Division Dialogue Session"(2008)

The Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal SSW Program is designed to:

- Provide positive role models.
- Assist in developing a learning environment and atmosphere that is conducive to learning for all students.
- Establish, as necessary, personal contact with parents/guardians through phone calls or visits to the home.
- Work with school staff to track students' academic progress, communicating information on student progress to parents/guardians when needed.
- Work proactively with students, staff and families to encourage positive behaviour and participation in school, staying informed of possible student discipline issues and providing intervention or support if appropriate.
- Work with system staff and appropriate external educational organizations for stay-in-school strategies and academic success.

How Does a Mi'kmaq/ Aboriginal Student Support Worker Support Students and Families?

- Provides personal support to identified students, and parents/guardians when appropriate, in many different settings
- Acts as a liaison between students, staff, family and the community
- Understands the histories and circumstances of students.
- Identifies available external educational programs and opportunities such as tutoring programs, scholarships, learning programs, cultural activities, and more
- Works with students to explore course selection, career options and post-secondary education
- Encourages daily school attendance and on-time arrival at school
- Helps staff and students create a school environment that is welcoming and reflects cultural diversity

