



ISD #94

Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative

302 14th Street
Cloquet, MN 55720

Mission Statement

Together schools and communities will educate students to become academically successful and socially responsible citizens

www.nlsec.org

follow Arc Northland on facebook

NLSEC website - we have a new look
Nlsec.org

We are up and running (our website is, that is).
Our new address is:
www.nlsec.org.

Some of the changes you might notice:

- Automatic redirection to a secure version. This gives our site another layer of protection, and includes data forms you might fill out
- All resources are in one area – more convenient for you
- ADA compliant website making use easier for all
- Mobile friendly version



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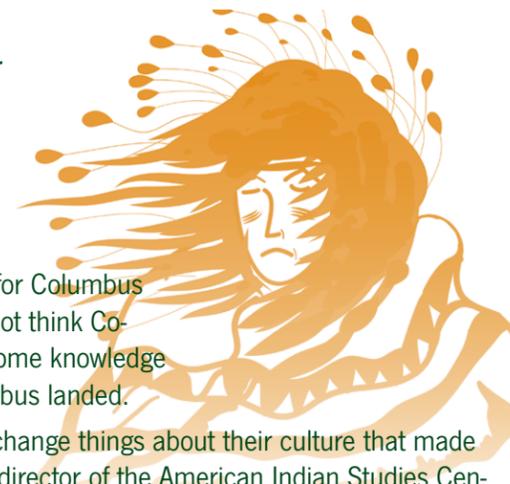
Winter 2017

Northern Lights Intergency Council - serving children, families and educators

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY
By Georgia W

(Student Article written by a work-based learning high school student in one of NLSEC's member districts)

Indigenous Peoples' Day is the new and (in my mind) more appropriate name for Columbus Day. Many people think it's inappropriate to celebrate the day in general. I do not think Columbus Day shouldn't be celebrated at all, but I do think it should come with some knowledge of what happened to the native people who lived in the Americas before Columbus landed.



How many Native American people were forced to change things about their culture that made them different as a result of colonization? Like the director of the American Indian Studies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles, said, "Virtually none of my university students has had any education whatsoever in the history of this country's treatment of the ten million or so people who lived here before Europeans arrived." The director was speaking of university students who have never been explained the dark side of the "finding of the Americas" that history textbooks do not cover. Most people go through life not knowing the truth of what happened to Native American people. Just like the "First Feast," but that's another topic, Columbus Day has been celebrated since the 18th century, but became a federal holiday in 1937. People are proud of this thing we have been told every year since the first time we entered school.

Brand Neal is of European descent and in college he took a course that was called "American History Before 1492." As he began to learn of what really happened to the people and the land in the Americas before Columbus, he started to rethink what it means to celebrate Columbus day. Lots of people think it's wrong to support what happened back then but like Councilman Russ Neal said, "Columbus was deplorable, so why support him?" It is common knowledge that Columbus never actually set foot in the United States, but bounced around the Caribbean trying to find something he could sell. He found indigenous people on an island and attempted to enslave them and force them to give him gold. When he did not get what he wanted from the people he murdered them. With that said, many people are uneducated of the history or just do not care.

There are many who are supportive of the change to Indigenous Peoples' Day and cities and states across the country are making the switch. Not everyone agrees, though, and this is something in my school that I personally feel we have a problem with. The problem is racism and a lot of students in my high school say things that are hurtful to me, as I am Native American among other races. I have witnessed people being called things like "a stupid lazy native" or things like "a damn dirty Mexican." Maybe by changing the name from Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day, more people will be made aware of the true history of the Americas and children of the future won't face the racism I've experienced.

Funding for Special Connections is provided by NLSEC's Intergency Council.

Special Connections serves the school districts of the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative, including:

Barnum • Carlton • Cloquet
Cromwell-Wright • Esko • Hermantown
Lake Superior • McGregor • Moose Lake
Proctor • Willow River • Wrenshall

Questions about any of the information presented in this newsletter or ideas about what you would like to see covered in subsequent issues, should be directed to the:

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The Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative (NLSEC) serves 12 school districts located within five counties in northeast Minnesota.

Districts include:
Carlton County - Barnum, Carlton, Cloquet,
Cromwell-Wright, Esko, Moose Lake and Wrenshall,
Aitkin County - McGregor,
Lake County- Lake Superior,
Pine County- Willow River,
St. Louis County - Hermantown and Proctor.

Mentoring Day



Mentoring Day is a local version of the National Disability Mentoring Day which is organized by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). It has occurred regionally as “Rocketing into the Future”, under the leadership of the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative (NLSEC) since 1992.

Mentoring Day has remained as a transition conference for high school students with disabilities. The day is comprised of break-out sessions for students and conversations with various service providers, colleges, employment agencies, etc. Students get an opportunity to learn about various topics such as; careers, employment skills, money management, post secondary education, military, driver’s education, self-advocacy, housing, transportation and more. The main objective of the day is to provide students with information to assist in planning for their transition to adulthood.

Students will also have the opportunity to engage in mock interviews which will take place throughout the day.

This day is also set up for parents to receive information with regard to their child transitioning from high school into the adult world. Examples of past speakers/agencies that have attended; Minnesota Department of Education, Social Security Administration, MN Disability Law Office, County Services, ARC Northland, Access North and St. Luke’s.

This year it will be held at **Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College on March 12, 2018**. Students will have the opportunity to choose from among 50 breakout sessions. Arrival time will be around 8:45 am to pick up schedules. Students will also be provided a pizza lunch with a beverage. Please consider being a part of this remarkable day!

Please note, Mentoring Day will happen snow or shine! In case of severe weather, check your local news station the morning of the event for cancellation.

*Mentoring Day questions can be directed to: Jessica Knutsen, jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us



Helpful website: MinnesotaHelp.info

Check out this state-wide database that provides a variety of useful information on topics like employment, waivers, disability resources and more.

Agencies connecting with families



Lighthouse Center for Vision Loss

Training and technology for independence

2017–18 school-year transition program

For: Students ages 14–21 with vision loss, with authorization by MN State Services for the Blind Counselor Program goal is to empower young people with vision loss for future success and independence with a focus on technology and life after high school. Each student will be loaned a Lighthouse computer to help them participate in remote training sessions and practice new technology skills on state of the art equipment.

Features of the program:

- Four on-site weekends during the school year
- Remote training sessions and assignments
- Group instruction combined with 1:1 training
- Monthly parent meetings (offered remotely) and a parent component during first on-site weekend
- Connection with your school, if desired

If interested:

- Contact the Lighthouse Center for Vision Loss 218-624-4828 or email at info@lcfvl.org
- The program has already started but late registrations are accepted
- Fill out an application available online at the Lighthouse website: www.lcfvl.org
- Contact your State Services for the Blind Counselor and let them know of your interest
- On-site weekend dates: Oct. 27–29, Feb. 2–4, April 2–22 and June 8–10.



think small can help you learn big

Children learn and develop quickly. Ninety percent of brain development occurs by age 5! Think Small provides services, resources and advocacy for early childhood education in Minnesota and they want to help families take advantage of the early learning years – all without ever leaving home.



Think Small will send you fun facts and easy tips on how you can promote your child’s learning. The weekly information will come directly to your phone via text message. There is no cost to participate and so much to gain.

To sign up, visit the Think Small website at www.thinksmall.org, click on About and click on the parent powered text link at the bottom of the list on the left side of the page. You’ll be glad you did!

Northland Foundation

– early learning scholarships



An Early Learning Scholarship can help you pay for high-quality childcare and early education to help your child get ready for school. The Northland Foundation is offering early learning scholarships up to \$7,500 per child per year. A scholarship must be used at a Parent Aware-Rated program. The money is paid directly to the Parent Aware-rated setting of your choice.

Early Learning Scholarships increase access to high-quality early childhood programs for 3 and 4-year-old children with the highest needs to improve school readiness for all young children. Children birth to 2 years old are eligible if they meet one or more of the criteria:

- Child of a teen parent.
- Currently in foster care.
- In need of child protective services.
- Experienced homelessness in the last 24 months.

Priority for scholarships will be given based on family income, child poverty, one of the special populations as noted previously, and geographic region. Families must meet eligibility requirements.

Applications can be found on the Northland Foundation website: www.northlandfdn.org. For more information, call the Northland Foundation at 1-800-433-4045.



2nd Annual Minnesota School Mental Health Conference

Location: Cragun’s Resort, Brainerd

Date: November 8–10

Theme: Everyday Tools to Build Resiliency

Who should attend: School staff
Community mental health providers
Superintendents
Principals
Business managers
Third party billers
Local collaboratives
Mobile crisis providers
Parents
County mental health staff
Tribal mental health staff

Conference objectives:

- Understand how culture and trauma affect students’ ability to learn
- Learn about mental health and school evidence-based practices (EBP) that can provide integrated supports to students to help them succeed
- Develop understanding of the school and mental health service providers’ roles and responsibilities in a multi-tiered support system
- Explore different funding opportunities for school mental health services

For information about conference schedule, lodging and registration, **visit the conference website at mn.gov/dhs/slmh/**