

Gitigaan News

AANIIN GAKINA AWIIYA!

Even in the colder months, learning has extended outdoors with winter activities that help students stay connected to the land—exploring seasonal changes, observing animal tracks, and engaging in hands-on experiences in and out of the classroom. Looking ahead, we are especially excited for sugar bush season, when students will learn about maple sap collection and cultural traditions tied to this time of year, as well as the start of seed planting for our school gardens. These upcoming activities mark the transition toward spring and offer meaningful, place-based learning experiences that continue to grow our Farm to School efforts.

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Lesson Highlights

Animal Tracking

Sixth grade students were offered two sessions with Red Cliff Wildlife Biologist, Genevieve Adamski this Winter. We hiked the ravine looking for signs of wildlife and identified coyotes, squirrels, and deer. Students learned foot shapes along with movement types to identify the animals. (below)



Fry Bread

Guest instructor, Charmaine Ramierez, owner of Breadyly, shared her mother's methods and recipe with Middle School Alt Ed Students. We enjoyed her delicious fry bread with butter and cinnamon sugar and in the form of venison tacos. Miigwech Charmaine! (above)

Elementary

What have younger students been learning about this winter with Mrs. Kat? They've been exploring animal tracks and and discovering the fish of the Northwoods! We've also had fun with hands-on food lessons including making berry smoothies and homemade pizza! Check out the "thinnest pizza in the world"! (right)



Biboon Gabeshiwin

Winter Camp has been a meaningful and memorable experience for youth, offering hands-on learning rooted in culture, community, and the natural rhythms of the season. Students engaged in outdoor activities, traditional teachings, and place-based lessons. Biboon Gabeshiwin continues to be a powerful opportunity for experiential learning, fostering respect for the land, strengthening cultural awareness, and creating lasting memories for our school community.



Around the World in 80 Trays

Each February in the cafeteria, we spend a week traveling to different regions of the world—right from our lunch trays. This year, we sampled foods from Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, Turtle Island, and North Africa. Each day, we listen to traditional music from the featured region, locate it together on the globe, and explore images of cultural dress, architecture, art, and landscapes. Students and staff alike vote daily on whether they enjoyed the cuisine. After tallying the results, this year's favorite was Filipino Beef Adobo (with many students already asking to see it back on the menu soon)! Chi miigwech to our wonderful food service staff for making this event such a fun and meaningful tradition year after year.

USDA Farm to School Grant

This winter, we have dedicated time and energy to advancing our Farm to School Action Plan, using it as a road map to guide the next phase of our program. Through collaboration with staff, administrators, food service, and community partners, we have been reviewing current efforts, identifying strengths, and setting clear, achievable goals. Our work has focused on strengthening classroom integration, expanding hands-on learning opportunities, increasing local food procurement, and building sustainable systems that support long-term success. The Action Plan process has provided valuable space for reflection and alignment, ensuring that our Farm to School program continues to evolve in a thoughtful, strategic, and community-centered way.



Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking to become involved in the Gitigaan Program? Involvement can look a lot of different ways, but can include assisting with wild harvest field trips and events, teaching a food or medicine related workshop to students in exchange for a monetary honorarium, volunteering during gitigaan lessons, attending community workdays in the gitigaan, summer gardening help and/or attending gitigaan committee meetings.

Reach out to Kat Rakowski at krakowski@bayfield.k12.wi.us for more information

