Let’s Lead Nīkānētān SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

What is it? (Mission Statement)
Through experiential education, students in Let’s Lead - Nīkānētān will plan for their future by developing leadership and teamwork skills in a culturally responsive way, thereby enriching their lives and our community.
Let’s Lead - Nīkānētān is a full school year program for grade 8 students who enjoy experiencing:
- First Nation's and Metis cultural teaching and opportunities,
- Camping and living on the land
- Improving leadership and teamwork skills
- The grade 8 curriculum in a practical hands on format

Who is it for?
Let’s Lead - Nīkānētān is for grade 8 students who want to spend their entire grade 8 year learning the curriculum through hands-on, out of school experiences. It is for young people who have shown the potential for leadership and would like to further develop it. Our program is geared towards those students who have this potential, but might not have been able to develop it. All equipment, transportation and food costs along with any other fees incurred will be covered completely by the program for each student.

Who are the staff?
The staff of Let’s Lead - Nīkānētān are Brad Watts and Tamra Knaus. They have more than 20 years of experience in teaching leadership and teamwork and working in an outdoor environment.

How much will the program cost?
The Saskatoon Public School Division, along with Westmount Community School provides the teachers, facilities and equipment. Students will not be required to pay any fee to participate in the program. There will be times when the students are expected to help with a fundraiser or community service. All of the cost for equipment, student gear, food on trips, and travel expenses are covered.
What do I get out of it? What is the program’s philosophy?
There are nine components of our overall vision regarding how the grade 8 curriculum will be taught to the students in Let’s Lead – Nikânêtân. They are as follows:

**Relationship Building**
This includes developing relationships between the students as well as with the staff members who work with them. We feel that it is very important that we all are able to work together and have a respectful, cooperative, and understanding relationship between all people in the class. This relationship is critical for the best learning to take place.

**Integrated Project Based Learning**
This includes doing long term and real life projects with all subject areas integrated. There will not be scheduled separation of subject areas.

**Assessment for Learning**
This includes using student and teacher developed criteria to assess our work rather than using marks or percentages. Student involvement in the creation of the report card, and learning from our mistakes is an important part of the program.

**Future Vision**
This includes working on career education, improving self-concept and self-confidence, developing a sense of hope, planning for the future (job, education, lifestyle), and valuing lifelong active living.

**Teamwork & Leadership**
This includes working on communication skills (speaking, listening, and writing), developing independence and responsibility, learning how to use strengths and challenge our weaknesses, developing presentation and decision making skills, learning risk management, working and learning in teams, and learning from failures to turn them into successes.

**Cultural Responsiveness**
This includes learning from multiple world views. We see our diversity as a strength and a resource that we must utilize to make the group stronger. Engaging in a variety of cultural experiences helps us to become global citizens.

**Experiential Education**
This includes learning in the best place at the best time, which will usually be out in the real world, being hands on and doing things instead of just learning about them, spending as much time in the great outdoors as possible and experiencing as many different career options as we can fit in one school year.

**Choice**
We feel that being able to choose and make choices is important; because throughout your life you will have to make choices all the time. This means that our students are treated as young adults with opportunities to make choices, make mistakes and deal with the natural consequences. The first choice you get to make it is to apply to spend your grade 8 year with us.

**Fun**
Our goal is to ignite a passion for learning and to make it joyful with all of the students in Let’s Lead – Nikânêtân.
Some of the experiences students have been offered in previous years are:

- 4 day leadership camp at Pike Lake
- 4 day camping trip at Blue Mountain Adventure Centre (Zip-lining, Wall climbing, Archery, High ropes course)
- Gymblasts
- University of Saskatchewan trips including gymnastics, biology, chemistry, observatory, etc
- 4 day winter camping trip to Brightwater
- Downhill skiing
- Cross-country skiing
- Canoe Training
- Swimming
- Wall-climbing
- 2 day Regina Science Centre & Museum
- Downtown computer lab
- Grocery store planning & trips
- Canoe Trip
- 3 day camping trip to Douglas Provincial Park
- Experience multiple world views through visits to spiritual and significant cultural places
- Opportunities to choose to participate in First Nations and Métis cultural activities (i.e. Smudge, teepee teaching, jigging, Pow Wow, etc.)
- Opportunities to learn from Métis, First Nations Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Community Members
- Partnership with the University of Saskatchewan with lots of hands-on experiences on campus.
- Swimming, lifesaving and first aid lessons at our city pools.
- Cycling throughout the city due to the sponsorship of General Mills and Kinsmen Saskatoon, who have provided us with a class set of bikes.

What about meals?
All meals will be provided for the students on all of the trips. Students will be expected to bring a daily lunch on days the students are not away on a trip. Any student that needs one will be provided with a lunch.

What about extra-curricular activities?
Due to the nature of this program, students may not be able to participate in other extra-curricular activities that take place at the school.
What will be expected of me if I am in the class?

1. You must be prepared to spend time away from home on our out-of-school camping trips and our day to day activities. The length of time for the camping trips can vary from three to five days in duration. Day to day class activities may involve time during the day or evening. Your class time may not always be between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. We prefer to schedule activities and camps weeks or months in advance but occasionally opportunities come up with short notice. As we like to take advantage of all learning opportunities and be responsive to the learning needs of the class some of these activities may be scheduled with less than 48 hours notice.

2. Be present and on time throughout the year.

3. Will have appropriate behavior at all times in both supervised and unsupervised situations (on public transit, independent work time, solo time, etc.)

4. Persevere throughout the year, on activities and in trips. A person who is willing to dig in and try harder as soon as the going gets rough will strengthen the rest of the group. Our aim is to develop and encourage resilience in students.

5. Show enthusiasm and cooperation at all times with all of the other group members and leaders.

6. Be willing to work until the job is done, not just when you've done your share.

7. Dress appropriately. This means wearing suitable waterproof clothing and footwear that we provide.

What kind of equipment will I need?

All necessary equipment will be supplied to each student in Let's Lead - Nikānētān. If students wish to use their own equipment, they may but it is not required. Equipment that will be supplied includes:

- Waterproof jacket & pants
- Waterproof boots
- Sleeping bag & mat
- Backpack
- Paddle & lifejacket
- Tents
- Bike Helmet and Bike

Where does the program take place?

Let's Lead - Nikānētān is based out of Westmount Community School at 411 Avenue J North, 683-7490. Much of the time, the students will be learning and doing activities outside of the school throughout the city of Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan.

How do I get to the program?

Each student will be given a monthly bus pass to keep and use throughout the year to get from his/her home to Westmount Community School and anywhere else our travels take us in Saskatoon.
How do I apply?
1. All interested students and parents / guardians should come to an information meeting on Thursday, April 6th, 2017 at the Westmount Community School in the gym at 6:00pm.
2. Fill in the following student information and parent permission form and send it to Brad Watts at Westmount Community School. All applications must be received by the office at Westmount Community School by 4:00pm on Friday, May 12, 2016. You can ask your home school’s front office to send it to us through school mail.
3. Of the students that apply, approximately fifty students will be chosen to participate in an application camp at Pike Lake on Wednesday, May 24th and Thursday, May 25th, 2017. (Students must notify their school of participation in this camp.) Tents, transportation and meals will be provided. If you need a sleeping bag, one will be provided. Those students that meet the selection criteria (see below) will have their names entered in a lottery and twenty-eight of these students will be chosen to form the Let’s Lead – Nikānētān classroom in the fall.

The selection criteria is based on the observation of students at application camp and how well they perform in the following areas:

- Their ability to get along with others
- Make responsible independent choices
- Be safe and responsible
- Contribute to the group
- Persevere to the end
- Listen and respect both peers and teachers
- Show self-control
- Be kind, caring, and accepting of others
- Show a willingness to learn and take correction from others
- Be physically able to meet the demands of camp
Application Form (due Friday, May 12th, 2017)
(You must detach this section and send to Brad Watts at Westmount Community School)

By completing this form, the student is applying to the Let’s Lead Nikânêtân program and you as the parent or guardian are giving permission for your child to participate fully in all activities and meet the expectations outlined in the above application package.

Student’s Name:_____________________________________________
Student’s Gender:________________________
Student’s Home Address:_______________________________________
Student’s Phone Number:________________________ Student’s Hospitalization #:__________
I have fully read the above information and I support and permit my child to participate in this program.
Parent / Guardian’s Name:_______________________________________
Parent / Guardian’s Signature:_____________________________________
Student’s Current School:________________________________________
Student’s Current Teacher:________________________________________

Optional Section:

Please provide any information you would like us to know about the student applying to the Let’s Lead - Nikânêtân program.