

WELCOME TO

# Poplar Hill First Nation



**TEACH  
FOR  
CANADA**



**boozhoo**





# Poplar Hill First Nation

Dear Teachers,

Poplar Hill welcomes you to our community! We are located near the Manitoba border on the beautiful Beren's River in a region that you will soon get the chance to discover and fall in love with.

We are happy to be welcoming you to our brand new school. You will have the chance to teach in a beautiful, state of the art building.

You will learn a lot this year. Some days will be challenging, others will be incredibly fulfilling; some will be both. Community members and colleagues will be there to support and encourage you when things get difficult and equally there to share in your joys and successes. Remember that everyone here is working towards the same goal: the success and happiness of the kids. By organising clubs and extracurricular activities, you can contribute even more to the ways that students can discover their strengths and interests.

The people of Poplar Hill are Ojibwe. Our community shares and maintains strong ties with Pikangikum and Little Grand Rapids. Take the time to discover the history, language, and culture during your time in Poplar Hill. It will help you understand the way of life here and allow you to have a much richer experience. One of the best ways to learn is to participate in community activities and events. You don't need to receive an invitation to attend, just come out, have fun, and lend a hand.

We look forward to meeting and working with you!

Sincerely,

**Rocky Landon**

Principal

Ahgwahbuush Memorial School

# Community



## A Brief History

**1953**

Mennonites establish mission outposts in the Red Lake area, including in Poplar Hill.

**1962**

With government financial assistance, Mennonites opens the Poplar Hill Development School, a residential school for local children. Initially it has residential facilities for 30 students.

**1977**

Poplar Hill Development School expands to accommodate 55 students with 30 adult support staff.

**1978**

Poplar Hill First Nation achieves full Band and reserve status when it separates from Pikangikum First Nation. To this day, Poplar Hill maintains strong ties with Pikangikum and Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba.

**1989**

The Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC), which controls the federal funding for schools in First Nations communities, tries to get the board of the Poplar Hill Development School to end the use of corporal punishment, including use of the strap, to discipline students. The Poplar Hill board refuses to discontinue the practice. The government withholds its funding and the school does not reopen in the fall of 1989.

**1990s**

Poplar Hill is included in the Canadian residential school legal actions.

**1997**

Impact North Ministries issues an apology to Poplar Hill on behalf of the Mennonite community. The apology recognizes that staff members imposed an external culture on the students, limited their ability to use their language, and used foreign methods of discipline.





# The Climate

The winters are colder in Poplar Hill than in the south, but there is less humidity so it doesn't feel as cold as it would in Hamilton or Kingston.

As long you as you dress for the weather (hat, good long coat, warm mittens, warm boots, etc.), you will be fine!

Moose and walleye are commonly found in Poplar Hill.

## Poplar Hill Community Map



# Ahgwahbuush Memorial School



## Welcome!

### School Population

135 - predicted to grow to 200

### Grades

Kindergarten to Grade 8  
KiHS

### Principal

Rocky Landon

### What is the school most proud of...

- We are very proud of our attendance rate which is around 88%. Students actively attend school. Kids want to learn here!
- Our students speak Ojibwe fluently. As a teacher, it is beautiful to hear kids speaking to each other in their language in the hallways and on the playground. Students graduate with their language intact.







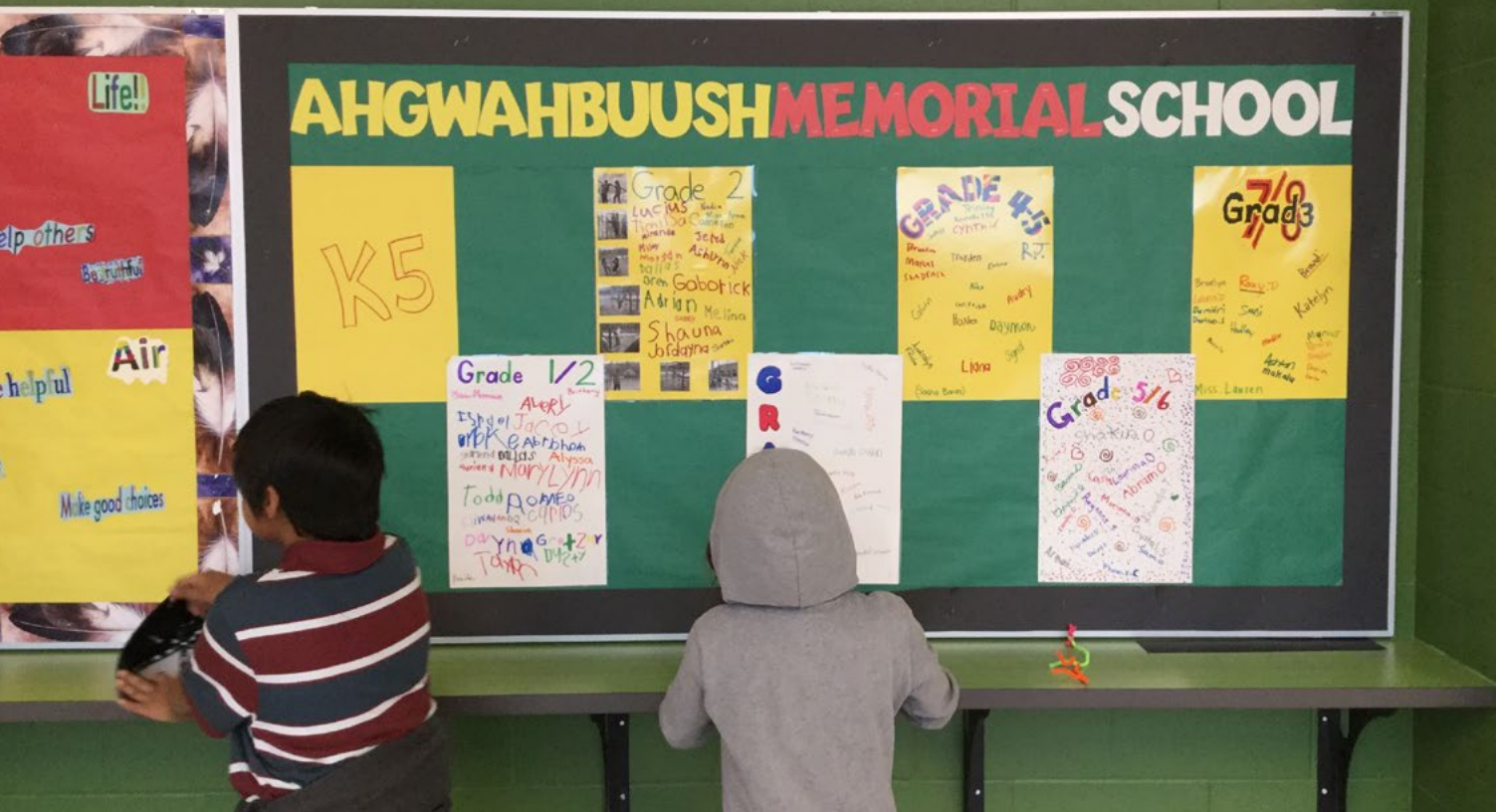
# A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Teachers are expected to be at school from 8:30 to 4pm, except some Fridays when they may leave as soon as the students have gone home.

Teachers should strive to remain flexible, relaxed and be willing to compromise. Students may initially be quiet in class, until they get to know their teacher, at which point they will become more relaxed and out-going.

The school has a zero tolerance policy for bullying, which includes most teasing. School dress is casual: clean clothes but no suits, jeans are acceptable. Children love their teachers and parents are generally very supportive of teacher requests.





## School Facilities

We are delighted to have moved into the brand new Ahgwahbuush Memorial School in the fall of 2016. The new building includes classrooms, a fully functional kitchen, a gym, a new school yard and new school furniture.

### Classes

Special Education classes are continuing to be developed at Poplar Hill. The new school will also provide the opportunity to offer life skill courses with the kids, as there are kitchens, computer labs and a science lab.

### School Events and Extracurricular Activities

Several clubs are organised by teachers after school, such as running, volleyball, art, and knitting. Teachers are welcome to organise a club based on their interests and abilities.

A number of activities are also organised to contribute to fundraising for the grade 8 trip, such as bake sales, dances, and movie nights.

Poplar Hill is connected to Pikangikum First Nation when the winter road is open, which offers the opportunity to hold events with their school, such as hockey games.





## Teacherages

Teacherages consist of one bedroom, a living room, dining room, and kitchen, which are furnished (table, chairs, pots, pans, fridge, stove, small freezer).

Modems are available at the band office. There is no charge for the internet. Internet access is generally quick and reliable. Water, heat, and hydro are included in rent, which is approximately \$600 a month, depending on whether teachers live by themselves or share a unit. TBaytel is the best cellphone provider for the area. Some teacherages are also equipped with a jack for a landline, which can be activated by contacting Bell Canada.

The school, nursing station and Northern Store are easily accessible from the teacherages on foot.







# Community Activities

## Events

There is a Traditional Week held every year but the dates change from one year to the next.

There is a Hunting Week every fall. During the Summer, there are Treaty Days. Howard Moose runs a series of events for the kids.

## Regular Activities

There is a new gym and treadmills, which allow teachers to keep fit. Last year, teaching staff offered a fitness program after school.

There is a new hockey rink outside the school. Members of the community love volleyball and hockey (ice and floor). Participation from the teachers is very welcome!

A baseball field should be ready in a year, when the grass takes root.

The school gym is used for all types of activities, including the Right to Play Program.







## Community Facilities



### Health Unit

Health services in the community are excellent; residents have daily or immediate access to medical care from nurses or doctors. Two nurses manage the Health Unit and a doctor visits the community every two weeks. If you need to see a health care specialist and you call in the morning, you can usually get an appointment by the end of the day.

### Groceries

The Northern Store serves as both the grocery store and the post office. Mail comes in about three times a week. Prices are higher than in the south but comparable to those in Red Lake. A loaf of bread costs about \$6, sandwich meat (e.g. ham) \$10, a 12 case of pop between \$16-20. Eggs and milk are reasonably priced. A variety of meats are available, as are frozen fruits and vegetables. The selection of fresh produce and spices is more limited.

### Access to Poplar Hill

Poplar Hill can be accessed by chartered or scheduled flights. A scheduled flight is usually more affordable (\$200 from Red Lake, \$400 from Winnipeg, \$650 from Thunder Bay) but you are limited to one piece of luggage, with additional charges for a second bag, which might only be transported to Poplar Hill a day or two later, depending on the number of people on the flight.

When first moving to Poplar Hill, it can be worthwhile to charter a plane (\$900-1200, depending on the size of the plane). This allows you to bring to the community a greater quantity of non-perishable goods. It is cheaper to transport bulk purchases of toilet paper, tissue paper, canned food, cereal, etc. than to purchase them at the Northern Store. It is advisable to think through what you will need by preparing a meal plan. For example, there are 14-15 weeks from the beginning of the school year until Christmas, therefore bringing up 15 cans of something you eat once a week will carry you through until December.

### What's going on in Poplar Hill?

The best source of information for events and news is an open Facebook group. There is also a Facebook group where people buy and sell various goods, notably community members sell homemade meals, pies and pizzas.

# Get to Know Poplar Hill Community Members

## MEET JAMES SUGGASHIE, Band Councillor

---

### What do you like most about your community?

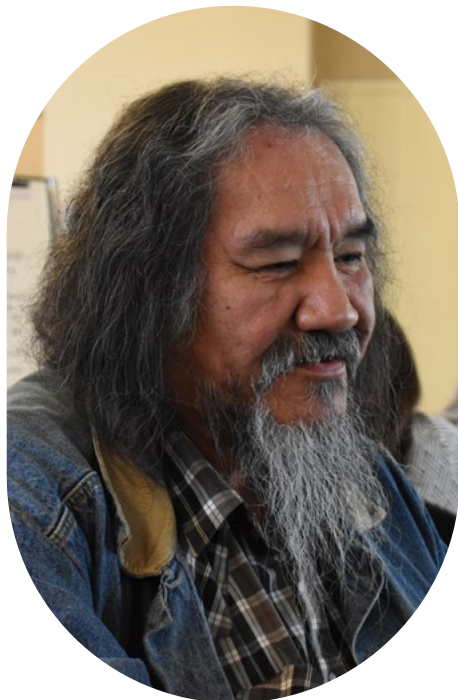
It is nice and small. There is a new school, with a gym, and new teacher residences. The school was built in the centre of the community, trying to expand around it. We have good teachers who have been here for I don't know how long - they must like it too!

### What do you like to do in the community when you have a day off?

I am involved with fishing derbies, and hunting festivals. I like to play baseball, volleyball, and hockey on the rink (but I'm too old to do that). I enjoy being with my grandkids; swimming, and skating.

### How would you describe your community to someone who had never been?

It is a good small community, right on a beautiful river system. Kids love their teachers and visitors. It is isolated, with no road access, even the roads in the community are lacking, and we experience power issues because the generator burnt down, but we're working on it. Our airport is ~4km away; someone can drive you or you can walk.



## MEET DONALD MOOSE, Education Director

---

### What do you like most about your community?

It is a small, friendly place; people like it. There are many cultural activities like fishing, hunting, canoes, and bingo.

### What do you like to do in the community when you have a day off?

I run my business, a store with food and snacks. Or I leave the community to visit Winnipeg.

### How would you describe your community to someone who had never been?

It is a small community of 600 friendly people. If you're friendly, you'll meet people. You'll make friends, get invited to games, and birthday parties. We have lots of good music and good food. There are lots of fishing activities - just be careful of bears! The new church is a big part of the community.



# The Student Corner

## MEET A GRADE 3 STUDENT

---

### What do you do on your days off? Why?

I like to play tag because it is fun. I play tag with my friends at the playgrounds.

### What is your favourite class or activity at school? Why?

I like to read because I like to read. My favourite book is 'Piggy and Gerald'.

### What do you like most about your community? Why?

I like outside because we can play. I like the trees, they are brown and green. Sometimes they are big and small.



## MEET CRYSTAL FAITH HOPE STRANG, A Grade 7 Student

---

### What do you do on your days off? Why?

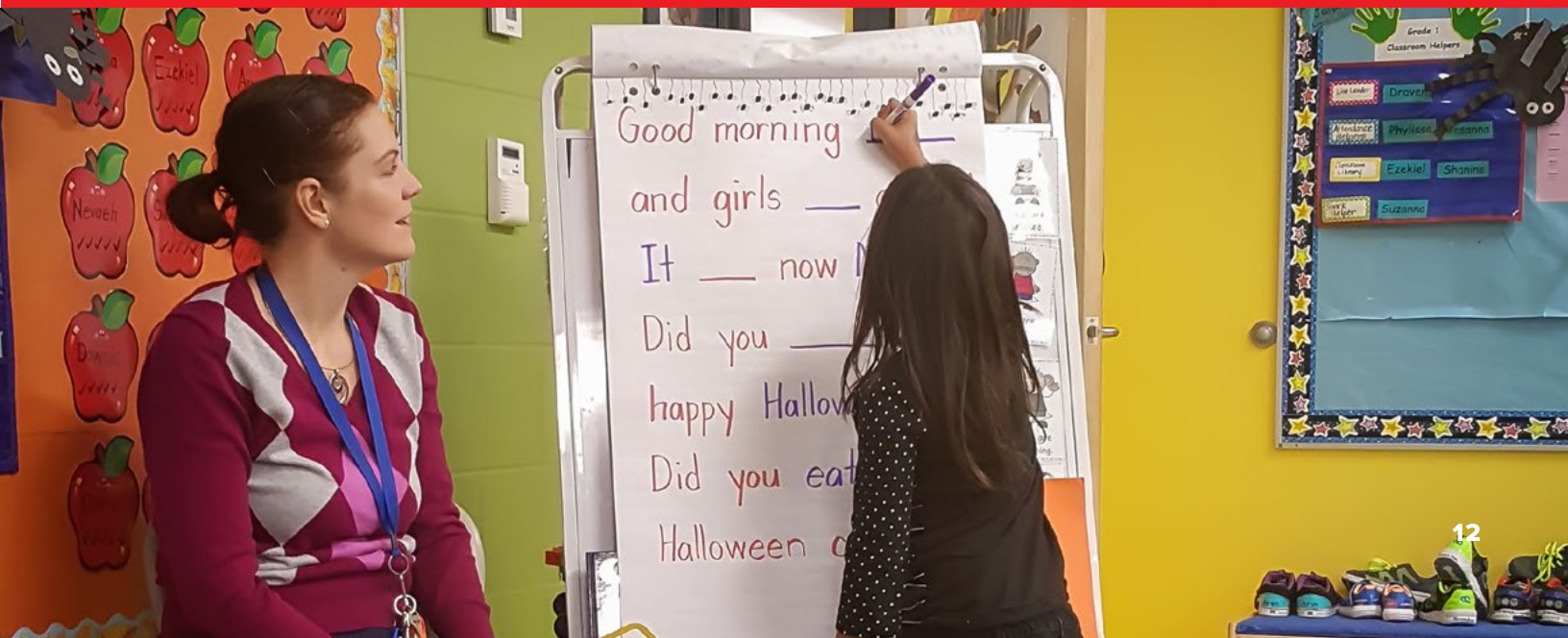
Stay inside my home or go out. When I stay inside that means I have nothing to do. When I go outside it means I have plans.

### What do you like most about your community? Why?

Events, like Treaty Days, because I actually see adults play games (they win it for the prize).

### What do you like about your favourite teacher(s)? Why?

I don't have a favourite teacher, to me, they are all equal for being my favourite.









# Around the Community



①

Sunset

②

Dogsledding

③

Northern Store

④

Vehicles leaving on the ice road

⑤

Right To Play program



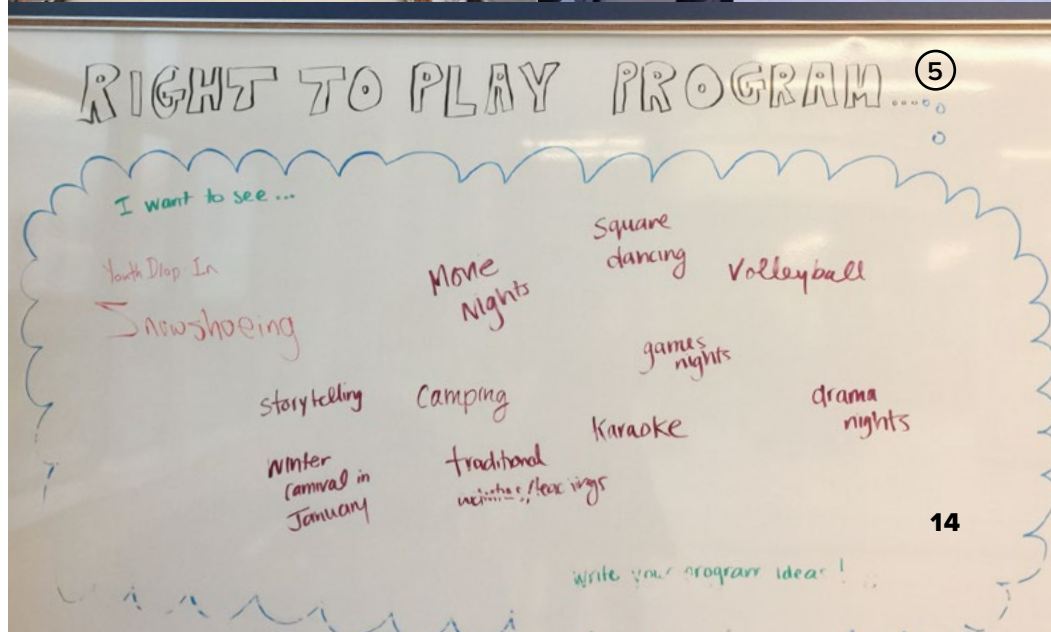
②



③



④



# Quick Facts

**Community Name**  
Poplar Hill First Nation

**Tribal Council**  
Keewaytinook Okimakanak

**Provincial Territorial Organization (PTO)**  
Nishnawbe-Aski Nation

## Population On-Reserve



**500**

## Language Spoken



**Algonkian  
(Ojibway)  
and English**

## Treaty



**Treaty 5**

## Average Yearly Temperature



**-19.8°C 18.3°C**  
January July

## Access



**Year-round**



**Jan - Mar**





## Poplar Hill Directory

**Poplar Hill Hotel**  
(807) 772-1029

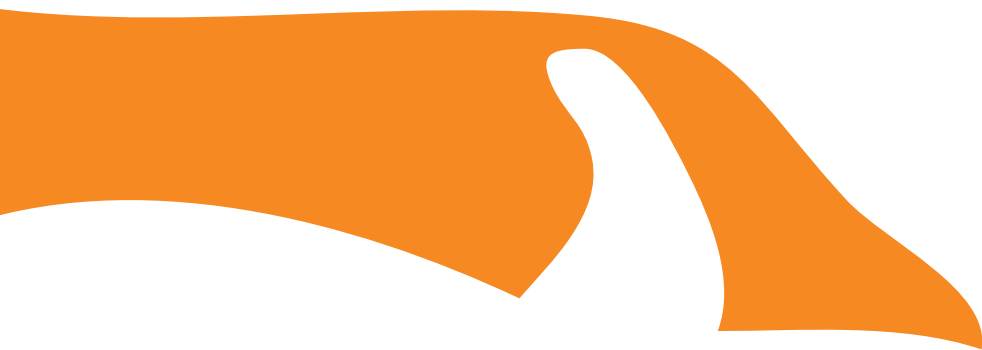
**Address (for deliveries)**  
PO Box 23  
23 Main Street  
Poplar Hill, ON  
P0V 3E0







**Miigwech.**





@TEACHFORCANADA  
**TEACHFORCANADA.CA**

CR number: 819967282RR0001