

Teacher Experience at Keewaytinook Internet High School



TEACH
FOR
CANADA

MEET ANITA LOCHS

High School English,
Poplar Hill First Nation

What do you enjoy most about being a KiHS teacher?

I enjoy the absolute independence I have being in charge of my KiHS class: the autonomy, the setting of my daily priorities (within reason and KiHS deadlines.)

What do you find most challenging about being a KiHS teacher?

If something has to get done—you alone have to show initiative and follow-through. This “many hats” aspect of the job (maintenance person, cleaner, breakfast preparer, electronic/internet troubleshooter, mentor, and teacher), and working alone can make prioritizing a bit stressful, your first year especially, as you have no frame of reference.

What has surprised you the most as a KiHS teacher?

What has surprised me is how the students change from ‘deer in the headlights’ quiet to ‘social’ over a longer time (than in a big school). It takes a while to warm up. Also surprising: the reach of the technology: the students, for example, have just earned credit in KiHS’s brand new music course, online! They now know how to read music and play on a keyboard!

What do you think incoming KiHS teachers should know about the position?

You need to be comfortable working independently and with lots of ambiguity, especially at the beginning. You

have to cover many things, from maintenance of the building to advertising events in the community, on the radio, by posting at the Nursing Station, etc.

This workplace (KiHS) is challenging and rewarding, but it requires patience. If a potential teacher is in her/his first year of teaching ever, it would be prudent to expect to feel lonely and unrooted. One must learn to make and use of an efficient “buddy” system, and for example, discuss concerns with colleagues on the phone or the internet. It can be done—the staff have all been there—and it is important to reach out as needed (but ideally keep queries short).



Anita teaching