

Smudging Ceremonies Summary

What is Smudging

- Smudging is a ritual cleansing practiced by Native North American peoples
- One or more of the sacred medicines are burned for their specific properties:
 - Sweet grass-used to attract positivity
 - Tobacco-used to pray to the creator
 - Cedar-used as protection from negativity
 - Sage-used to bring in good energy
- Smudging happens when hosting an Aboriginal community event, meeting and/or inviting Elder(s) or Aboriginal artist(s) to schools
- People smudge: regalia, drums, themselves, room/area, and other areas
- Participation in smudging is voluntary, if you do not wish to or are unable to participate in smudging, you may step back or not stand up

Why is a smudging ceremony conducted?

- To bring about a sense of grounding, direction and connection
- To see, feel, think and act with clarity
- To help create a positive mindset
- To cleanse/purify a person, place or object of negative energies, feelings or thoughts

How is a smudging ceremony conducted?

- Sacred medicine(s) will be burned in a natural vessel – clay bowl, abalone shell, etc.
- An eagle feather or hands are put in the smoke which is then brought onto the body
- Participants may remove any metal (rings, watches, glasses, etc.) prior to the smudging ceremony



Procedures when conducting Smudging Ceremonies conducted inside St. Paul Public school buildings

A designated area(s) would be selected that provides sufficient ventilation so that the smoke would not migrate to other parts of the building. Working with building staff, building head engineer, and Environmental Services Staff these locations can be established. SPPS understands that on occasion, other individual rooms or locations may have a smudging ceremony performed. Please note since a smudging is a religious ceremony it is exempt from the Districts tobacco use policy on school grounds. In all cases, please follow the following protocols prior to and during a smudging ceremony.

Procedures

- All occupants in the building must be notified 48 hours prior to when a smudging ceremony will take place, date, time, location in the building
 - All parents should be notified in case their child has asthma, lung issues, or any medical condition that may be triggered by smoke
 - Building custodial staff so they can opt to put the fire panel into “test” mode and ensure that the HVAC system is currently operating at the time of the smudging
- A posting in the gathering space or individual classrooms or offices designating that a smudging ceremony is taking place
 - So people with medical conditions effected by smoke can avoid the areas
 - Visitors will know that it is ok that there is smoke in the building and not pull a fire alarm or call 911
- Ensure that a fire extinguisher is available at all times during the ceremony
- Choose a location within the building that has good ventilation whenever possible
- Minimize exposure to ignition sources (carpet, flammable wall coverings)

Posting Example

Smudging Ceremony In Progress

**This ceremony
Is a healing and cleansing ceremony
Of
XXX Community**

Small amounts of sacred medicines

(Including cedar, sage, sweet grass, tobacco)

Will be burned during this ceremony