

HOW CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CAN HELP SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Cultural activities are an important part of making classrooms safe and welcoming. We know that students are less likely to attend school if they feel like their culture is not valued. Culture is also a very important part of keeping students interested in learning.

RSAS can help schools bring culture into the classroom. They can connect schools with Elders and senior community members to teach schools about local culture. Schools will then know who to invite if they want to teach cultural activities. They also have someone they can ask questions if they are struggling. Below are some ideas for how RSAS teams can help support schools to get culture in the classroom.

➤ **RSAS teams can introduce Elders and senior community members to the school.**

- Invite Elders, senior community members and the school to join the RSAS Governance Committee.
- Culture in the classroom is important. Talk about how it helps students do better in school.
- Offer to show school staff around the community and introduce them to important people and places.
- Set up an event, such as morning tea, for the school, Elders and other community members to come together to talk about school.

➤ **Ask the school to work with the RSAS team to include culture in the classroom.**

- Invite Elders and senior community members to speak at assemblies, special events or in the classroom.
- Think of ways that languages and art can be used in the classroom to encourage participation.
- Find ways for culture to be included in school holiday activities and other projects. For example, a science project about wetlands could include cultural stories about fishing or a fieldtrip.
- Talk to students about what cultural activities they would like to do at school. You may want to set up a session where teachers can be involved in this discussion.

➤ **Promote cultural activities which are happening at the school or that the school could participate in.**

- Talk about cultural activities during the morning and afternoon bus runs.
- Tell families about cultural activities happening at the school. The school may wish to invite families to join in on some of these activities.
- Take photos to display around the school and share with families. You may also want to display art and other projects.