



DAREarts In Webequie – Showcase Day November 13, 2016

REPORT BY DAREarts LEAD TEACHER, LAURA MACKINNON

There were 30 kids in the show! Only three kids from the Grade 7/8 class didn't show up, which is pretty remarkable - a true testament to the strength of DAREarts' program and team this week.

Last night, we ran a full dress rehearsal - we ran the entire show in costume, with props, music and narration 4 times through. The last time was at the request of the kids! We had a full contingent of animals, as you'll see in the photos and a whole "flock" of younger kids as birds.

There are so many "alumni" that came to help - a full list of names is in the attached document. The community involvement and number of DAREarts alum who came to help or watch was overwhelmingly special. Evan in particular was a real member of our teaching team - the younger kids look up to him, he's generous with his artistic talents and was incredibly committed - there aren't enough words to capture how grateful we were for his participation - he's amazing. He took the day off work to be there for the first day of program in the classroom and was with us through to the end of each night. He asked for the lyrics of the song tonight because he's going to sing it with his family. This has meant so much to all of us - again, there really aren't words.

The show today:

We had all 30 kids by 1:45 and did a final dress rehearsal (that went really well). Also, I taught all the birds the dance 45 minutes before showtime, because they were keen to learn it! In our rehearsal the previous night, only the older kids who had created the choreography did the dance. It was a little wild, but the energy and enthusiasm was great!

We had all the kids in masks and carrying birds just after 2:00 pm, and we waited for the gym to fill up. We had a full house by 2:30, and Mary welcomed the audience and elder Rosalie Jacob did an opening prayer.

I did a short intro that highlighted DAREarts' long friendship with the community and echoed the message of the play - stronger, together.

The performance was fantastic! The kids were energetic, expressive and REALLY into it - no one shied away, or hid or didn't give it 100%. Wendell, as the bear, was an absolute gem - his physical acting was amazing. Braiden, Jada and Hannah (DAREarts alum) - were in the play and were such great role models for the younger performers - acting more dramatically, remembering cues and leading choreography. Tyler, as our youth mentor, filmed the show, handed out programs and helped with set up and tear down.

The song was sung live by the 30 kids, accompanied by Glenn, Evan on guitar, Dixon on guitar and Eric drumming. It was a confident performance and they seemed proud when they were singing. Even the boys!

When Mary (school principal) thanked us, she gifted us an amazing painting by Ananais Spence (the community's visual artist) for our silent auction at the gala. We were so honoured.

The community put together a great feast - soup, moose stew, macaroni salad, bannock, fruit and veggie trays, sandwiches and cookies. After everyone had eaten, we gathered for a group photo in front of the painting (see attached). There were so many positive conversations and reactions after the performance - the community really liked it. The recording of the song was played over and over at the request of different people.

All in all, great day. One of the best ever performance days.

We fly tomorrow. We are feeling such a mix of emotions - complete exhaustion, sadness about leaving, but the exhilaration of knowing we put everything we had into this. We can really see the growth in the community over the past few years. The leadership skills are evident in so many young people - it's inspiring and has us thinking about future programming.

Laura