

SMUDGING



Native people have always used herbs to purify their bodies & their environment, called “smudging”. Smudging is a respected & ancient practice of Indigenous people all over the planet. In our region, Ojibwe & DaKota people commonly used sweetgrass, cedar & sage. These plants are carefully ignited & the smoke is then used the way water is used to bathe in order to cleanse the mind, body & spirit of negative energy. In the home or office, smudging can be used to clear the environment.

Congratulations on receiving your smudge Kit for your classroom! Please be mindful with your smudging practice. Always smudge with good intentions and with a good heart.

***When should I smudge?** Typically, it’s good to smudge each morning, but we recommended starting the week by smudging Monday morning. If something occurs where negative feelings arise, it helps to smudge during these times to restore balance.*

***Who should smudge?** Once you are comfortable, it’s good to allow students to carry the smudge bowl around to their fellow classmates. All students may be allowed to smudge, however, girls who are experiencing their moon (menstruation) may opt not to handle the shell or to smudge. If you have further questions, feel free to ask a fellow staff member who may know more about this, or anyone from the MPS Indian Ed department.*

***How do I smudge?** Please ask that everyone is calm & quiet. Gently remove enough leaves from sage stems to make a ball about the size of a nickel. Roll leaves into a ball by placing them into your palms & rubbing them together. The ball then can be lit preferably with matches; however, a lighter can also be used. Place sage ball in a fireproof container or shell. Fan the sage with a feather or your hand in order to allow the smoke to rise. Allow each student, if they choose, to take the smoke and wash it over themselves. Please ask those with glasses to remove them before smudging.*

Allow each person take as much time as they need to smudge.

***What do I do if there is left over sage still burning?** Open a window & place the shell securely next to the window & allow the remaining sage to burn. It will go out on its own. You may burn leftover sage stems or place them next to a tree. Leftover ashes may also be placed outside next to a tree.*

