



**REGIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL #1**  
**FALL MEETING – NOVEMBER 27, 2018**  
VICTORIA INN  
THUNDER BAY, ON

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## PARTICIPANTS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kelly Crawford (Chair, KEB Director of Education)</li><li>• Cindy Fisher (Co-chair, REC Coordinator)</li><li>• Renee Restoule (Culture, Programs and Standards Manager)</li><li>• Yvonne Kowtiash (BZA-ED)</li><li>• Claire O’Nabigon (Long Lake #58 – ED)</li><li>• Lisa Michano-Courchene (Biigtigong – ED)</li><li>• Elaine Stewart (Pic Mobert – KEB Board)</li><li>• Nicole Simpson (Pic Mobert – ED)</li><li>• Judy Desmoulin (Long Lake #58 - KEB Board)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patrick Patabon (Long Lake #58)</li><li>• Alvina Michano (Biigtigong – REC Rep)</li><li>• Leah Vanderwey (EDU)</li><li>• George Scott (SNCDSB)</li><li>• Colleen Sheriff (SNCDSB)</li><li>• Kerry Desjardins (SNCDSB)</li><li>• Yvonne Morrison (EO – EDU)</li><li>• Nicole Morden Cormier (SGDSB)</li><li>• Maria Vasanelli (SNCDSB)</li><li>• Nancy O’Donnell (IL – SGDSB)</li><li>• Lynnita-Jo Guillet (EO – EDU)</li><li>• Judy Wawia (Trustee – SNCDSB)</li></ul>
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## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

The Kinooaadziwin Education Body (KEB) hosts a series of fall meetings every year, which bring together Regional Education Councils (RECs) and Ontario District School Boards (ODSBs). The two- day meetings see Participating First Nations (PFNs) gather on the first day, while the second day invites ODSBs within the region to join in. The purpose of the meetings is to provide a networking platform and to foster relationship-building between the parties.

The annual fall meeting for Regional Education Council #1 (REC #1) for the PFNs and ODSBs was held on November 27, 2018 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The event was attended by several PFNs of REC #1, including Biigtigong Nishnaabeg, Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, Long Lake #58 First Nation and Pic Mobert First Nation.

Kelly Crawford, Director of Education for the KEB, opened the meeting with a welcoming and introductions, followed by an opening prayer and the reading of Ngo Dwe Waangizid Anishinaabe. Some of the agenda items reviewed included First Nation education priorities, committee updates, and upcoming events and training. A summary of the day’s agenda is set out below.

### Regional Priorities

Cindy Fisher presented the regional priorities for REC #1, which were established at the 2018 Niigaan Gdizhaami February Forum. Participants discussed the status of the regional priorities, and how an effective update on the progress of the priorities can be presented at the 2019 February Forum.

Representatives from the ODSBs discussed their challenges and successes, and posed questions relating to the priorities. The PFNs offered suggestions for ways to continue progress with the priorities and provide consistent communication between the parties.

Main points of conversation are set out below.

- This was the first time the ODSBs have been provided with the list of regional priorities.
- Hiring fluent language speakers is challenge among the ODSBs. They struggle with recruiting qualified teachers of the language, but they do not need to be certified. The PFNs suggest easing the requirements for language teachers and building relationships with the communities. This will encourage speakers to come forward.
- Communities are in need of immersion programs and a language revitalization plan. Grammar-based programs are not effective. Consider the Maori language format.
- ODSBs agree that legislation must be challenged in order to see change in programming. Together, PFNs and ODSBs need to figure out how to identify and maneuver around the rules and regulations that are not working.
- The PFNs have concerns about non-Indigenous teachers delivering Indigenous land-based courses.
- There is also frustration at the community level that no consultation is occurring between the ODSBs and PFNs, regarding curriculum programs. Consultation and engagement needs to be defined and ensured when developing curriculum programs.
- The PFNs and ODSBs suggest meeting more frequently to discuss their challenges and to find opportunities to better work together. Meetings could be more focused so that they are dealing with specific issues, one at a time for enhanced resolutions.

### ESA Guidelines

ODSB representatives were provided a copy of the ESA Guidelines. Many of the ODSBs and PFNs are now in the process of establishing Education Services Agreements, and the document can be a useful tool for ensuring inclusivity and mutual benefit between the parties.

Participants continued discussions relating to ESAs and identified reverse tuition agreements as an outstanding priority. The following items are among the top concerns related to reverse tuition agreements, from the PFNs perspective:

- Communication and negotiation regarding reverse tuition agreements needs improvement. There is a huge disconnect.
- Need to identify who pays for students who live in town and go to FN school. (ODSBs explained that if the student is on the nominal roll in the Provincial system on October 31, the tuition automatically goes to the school board.)
- Disagreement on when money is redirected to FN schools, when a student transfers from provincial school to a First Nation school.
- Negotiating for transportation funding.
- Need to address questions about tuition fees and billing for part-time and full-time course enrollment.
- First Nations are still receiving less tuition for FN students than those in the province.

### Special Education Committee

Priorities for the Special Education Committee were reviewed and feedback was collected from participants regarding best practices, recommendations, questions, and concerns. After reviewing and discussing priorities, the Ministry of Ontario provided a review of the Ontario special education scan.

Main points of discussion offered by the group included:

- There needs to be more information shared with the communities. PFNs are not aware of what's going on.
- The PFNs are interested in taking part in the Special Education Committee. Is there opportunity for community involvement?
- PFNs currently feel that they are not being consulted when it comes to special education.
- Many PFNs do not have special education teachers, even though statistics show that First Nation special education needs are higher than average.

## Data, Research and Evaluation Committee

### High-level Framework and Logic Model for MEA Evaluation and Research

With the recent completion of the High-level Framework and Logic Model for MEA Evaluation and Research, a summary of the document was reviewed with and provided to ODSBs and PFNs. Among other things, the logic model framework provides a basis for evaluating growth and changes in relationships throughout the implementation of the MEA. A sub-working group is currently developing a visual representation of the framework, which will be presented to participants at the 2019 February Forum.

### Draft guidelines regarding agreements for accessing and sharing Anishinabek First Nations education resources

Feedback has been collected from each of the four regions regarding processes and expectations for sharing AES education resources. Guidelines have been developed and will be adjusted to include the input and priorities of the four RECs.

The guidelines will provide recommended processes and best practices for the sharing and use of resources belonging to Participating First Nations. Resources include health and social services, Anishinaabe language and culture, as well as locally-developed courses.

A complete guideline document is scheduled to be provided to all PFNs and ODSBs at the 2019 February Forum.

### Cultural Competency Training Program and Criteria for selection of Anishinabek First Nations and School Boards to pilot the program

Kelly Crawford reviewed plans for the Cultural Competency training program with participants and collected feedback on the process of selecting pilot sites for training scheduled to occur in 2019.

The following suggestions were offered by PFNs and ODSBS in REC #1:

- Everyone should receive cultural competency training.
- Training should be customized to the community; based on local needs.
- Create a handbook for cultural competency that can be used by school boards and teachers.
- The PFNs of REC #1 agree that they need to advocate for a pilot site in their area.

## Regional Updates

The following topics were reviewed:

### **2019 February Forum and Youth Forum**

- The draft agenda was reviewed and information provided on the venue and planning process.

### **EDI Training**

- With the assistance of the Offord Centre, training will be offered in 2019 for Early Development Initiatives with AES kindergarten teachers.

### **Distribution of Inventory of Health and Social Services, Anishinabek Culture and Language Resources, and Locally-Developed Courses**

- The KEB will continue to expand its inventories of regional health and social services, culture and language resources and locally-developed courses in the coming months. Processes for sharing and accessing these inventories are also being developed and will be shared with PFNs and ODSBs upon completion.

### **Regional Fund Recipients**

- The 2018-2019 Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund recipients were selected and projects in each of the four RECs are in progress. The projects funded in REC #1 were shared with participants and some PFNs provided updates on the status of their individual projects.
- Further updates regarding the funded projects and the 2019-2020 fund will be provided at the 2019 February Forum.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Cultural Competency Training**

- Training should be delivered at the First Nation community level.
- A handbook of cultural competency priorities/guidelines should be created, for use by the PFNs and ODSBs.
- Identify a Pilot site in REC#1 for delivery of Cultural Competency Training.

### **Anishinaabemowin**

- Develop programs and standards related to language curriculum, i.e. dialect
- Address the concerns and recommendations of PFNs, in regards to the hiring of Anishinaabemowin instructors (fluent speakers vs. qualified teachers).
- Develop Anishinaabemowin immersion and language-revitalization plans.

### **Indigenous Land-Based Learning**

- Consultation – needs to be defined
- Program delivered by non-indigenous teachers
- PFNs have land based courses developed
- Opportunity in Goose/Spring Hunt; Fish Camp; Moose Camp; Rabbit/Winter Camp

### **Education Services Agreements**

- Participating First Nations and ODSBs should review ESA Guidelines together when developing their agreements.
- Communication processes and responsibilities of each party should be clearly defined within ESAs.
- Education Services Agreements should be negotiated and established in a manner that enables equal funding opportunities for each party.

### **Special Education**

- Participating First Nations and ODSBs must work collaboratively to ensure consistent involvement and sharing of information, in relation to special education.

### **Other**

- PFNs and ODSBs should meet more frequently, perhaps quarterly, to discuss challenges and opportunities to work together.
- Meetings must focus on specific concerns/issues for enhanced resolutions.

## **CLOSING**

Participants from REC #1 ended their gathering with a sharing circle to reflect on opportunities, challenges, growth and commitments. Some of the action items identified by the group include creating a language strategy for programming and conducting a language scan among the school boards, providing updates on the flow of provincial funding, defining consultation and engagement, and examining the consultation process for special education. PFNs and ODSBs agreed that better communication must be a priority in order to align their efforts for enhanced education delivery.