



**ANISHINABEK
EDUCATION SYSTEM**

2022 - 2023

**Niigaan
Gdizhaami**

Fund

Project Booklet





Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Cultural Advisors	6
Nipissing First Nation	
Whitefish River First Nation	
Wahnapitae First Nation	
Dokis First Nation	
Wasauksing First Nation	
Indigenous Curriculum Development	10
Biigtigong Nishnaabeg	
Atikameksheng Anishnawbek	
Land-Based Learning	12
Biigtigong Nishnaabeg	
Zhiibaahaasing First Nation	
Aamjiwnaang First Nation	
Binjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek	
Aamjiwnaang First Nation	
Academic Advisors/Student Supports	16
Biigtigong Nishnaabeg	
Long Lake #58 First Nation	
Moose Deer Point First Nation	
Language	18
Magnetawan First Nation	
Beausoleil First Nation	
Youth Leadership	20
Nipissing First Nation	
Aamjiwnaang First Nation	
Netmizaaggamig Nishinaabeg	
Community Projects	24
Wahnapitae First Nation	
Dokis First Nation	



Introduction

The Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund (the Fund) is an annual grant established by the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) and the Ministry of Education. The objective of the Fund is to support and invest in community and joint projects that advance the objectives of the Master Education Agreement (MEA), through five guiding priorities:

1. increasing knowledge and understanding of Anishinabek histories, cultures, perspectives, languages, and contributions (“Bimaadziwin”) and traditional Anishinaabe knowledge passed down from one generation to the next through ceremonial teachings (“Kendaaswin”);
2. enhanced opportunities for the engagement and participation of Anishinabek students, families, and communities to support Anishinabek student success and well-being;
3. facilitating the successful transition of students between Anishinabek First Nations’ schools and schools in the provincially-funded education system;
4. innovation and introduction of leading practices in Indigenous education; and
5. supporting collaboration between the Anishinabek Education System (AES) and Ontario District School Boards, including data and information sharing.

First Nation and Student Impacts

“After being out on the land for the retreat, I feel I have a want to live a good life and continue to study Anishinaabemowin.”

Student, Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat

“Being on the land changes a lot in a child as opposed to being in a classroom. The atmosphere is different, their demeanor is different, and their energy is different.”

Peter Shebagabow, Teacher, Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, Land Based Learning

“I feel more culturally connected, and during the retreat I had that gut feeling I was exactly where I was supposed to be.”

Student, Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat

“There were several students who had generally been struggling in math and at times resisting participating in math. With the kinesthetic learning in the beading and coding, these students were highly engaged and most proud to show their work to teachers and their parents.”

Teacher, Whitefish River First Nation, Cultural Educator at Shawanosowe School Phase 2

“Our students have become leaders, allies, and advocates for change in Indigenous perspectives within the school. Students who attended the Indigenous Youth Retreat are finding growth in self-esteem and self-confidence to help lead many different learning opportunities within the school.”

Tory Fisher, Teacher, St. Joseph Scollard Hall – Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth

“Land-based learning is critical for Anishinaabe students. It helps our students to be more connected with the land and our culture.”

Teaching Assistant, Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek, Land-Based Learning Program

In 2022-2023, the Fund assisted 15 Participating First Nations to implement 23 projects, totalling \$929,294. The 23 projects impacted over 3000 students across the AES.

15	23	3,000	\$929,294
Participating First Nations	Projects Supported	Students Supported	Funds Utilized

First Nations reported that because of the Fund projects, there has been an increase in:

- *student well-being;*
- *student self-esteem;*
- *attendance;*
- *grades;*
- *credits achieved;*
- *cultural knowledge;*
- *use of Anishinaabemowin;*
- *and*
- *positive relationships with peers and staff.*

Anishinabek students are resilient. Not only do they encounter everyday issues that a typical teenager may, but they also face the effects of intergenerational trauma due to loss of language, loss of culture, Indian residential schools, Indian Day Schools, and 60s Scoop.

Trends show that students are more inclined to attend and engage in school if there are cultural activities, Anishinaabemowin, culturally appropriate academic support, and land-based learning programs/curriculum delivered at their school. This is backed up by the countless student and parent interactions throughout the year.

“If it wasn’t for programs like the Indigenous Youth Retreat, I do not think my kid would be in school today” Parent, Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat.

Students are eager to learn about their culture and language and this is evident throughout all schools across the AES. For example, at the beginning of the school year, Nipissing First Nation students attending St. Joseph Scollard Hall took part in a week-long Indigenous Youth Retreat supported by the Fund. These students took it upon themselves to continue the traditions they learned at the Indigenous Youth Retreat. The students created their own drum group, made ribbon skirts and shirts, helped plan Indigenous events in their school, and even conducted a traditional stand-up election with their peers.

There are many dialects across the AES. The uniqueness of each dialect is important to note and acknowledge. The reader will notice different spellings for words such as *Anishinabek, Anishinaabek, Anishinabeg, Anishinabe, and Anishnawbek*. These different spellings are in the report to acknowledge the dialect of each First Nation.

The twenty-three projects implemented this year can be categorized into seven trending themes. These themes have consistently been utilized in the past four years of the Fund. The themes and projects are detailed below:

- *Cultural Advisors*
- *Indigenous Curriculum Development*
- *Land-Based Learning*
- *Academic Advisors/Student Supports*
- *Language*
- *Youth Leadership*
- *Community Projects*

Cultural Advisors

Nipissing First Nation

ANISHINAABEMOWIN REVITALIZATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY:
LEARNING ALL TOGETHER (MAAMWI-ENCHIUYAN)

Target Audience:

Anishinaabemowin students at Woodland Public School in grades 4 - 6.

Project Summary:

This project provided students with the ability to learn and reclaim their culture using technology. Students created class websites which included Anishinaabemowin resources that allowed them to access these resources at home with their families.

Applications such as FlipGrid, Quizlet, and Blooket allowed students the ability to access Ojibway words with local dialect pronunciations. Further, technology allowed for Elders to share knowledge, stories, and cultural teachings virtually.

Students created videos, learned the sound system, learned the Anishinaabemowin alphabet, used writing software to write skits and plays, and access a wide array of applications created specifically for second language learning.

Success Stories:

Using technology, Nipissing First Nation, in partnership with the Near North District School Board, successfully used technology (MacBooks) to integrate Anishinaabemowin in the classroom.

Students were immediately willing to share their learning of Anishinaabemowin using the applications Blooket, Kahoot, and Flipgrid on the MacBooks. Students that rarely spoke or engaged in the classroom, engaged on MacBooks and even assisted other students in using the applications. Students often told the teacher that the *"Anishinaabemowin class was the highlight of their day."*

The use of technology in the classroom has increased:

- *attendance;*
- *student engagement;*
- *Anishinaabemowin use in the classroom;*
- *cultural knowledge;*
- *connections within the community; and*
- *connections within school peer groups.*

Whitefish River First Nation

CULTURAL EDUCATOR AT SHAWANOSOWE SCHOOL PHASE 2

Target Audience:

Kindergarten to grade 6 students, staff, and families at Shawanosowe School.

Project Summary:

Phase 1 of this project occurred in 2021-2022. In Phase 1 of this project, the Cultural Educator shared the history of the community and infused an Indigenous perspective into all areas of curriculum.

In 2022-2023, phase 2 built on the culture and language resources created in phase 1. The Cultural Educator collaborated with teachers on lesson planning and created a bank of lesson plans and units specific to Shawanosowe School. The Cultural Educator worked collaboratively with the classroom teachers to plan events, land-based activities, trips, and cultural teachings.

Success Stories:

Students at Shawanosowe School benefitted greatly from the Cultural Educator. Students infused modern day technology with traditional crafting to create personalized bracelets. Students used a computer to code their bracelet loom design, and then crafted their bracelet on the loom based on the code they designed.

With the help of the Cultural Educator, students undertook a month-long project to design and sew their own ribbon skirts and shirts. One student who had significant difficulty focusing on any given task for more than a few minutes, was incredibly proud of his vest and regalia during the school's powwow. Not only did he dance for most of the powwow, but he also spent an entire hour seated and drummed with the community's drum group. This was a major accomplishment for the student.

"There were several students who had generally been struggling in math and at times resisting participating in math. With the kinesthetic learning with beading and coding, these students were highly engaged and most proud to show their work to teachers and their parents". Students were heard making statements such as "this is not math, this is fun!"

Steven Whitaker, Principal, Shawanosowe School

Wahnapiitae First Nation

NGOKIINOONWIN TEACHINGS - FOUR SEASONS

Target Audience:

Junior Kindergarten to grade 12 students of Rainbow District School Board and Sudbury District School Boards.

Project Summary:

This project provided students with land-based teachings and the four seasons. Students learned about teachings specific to each season, harvesting times, and hands-on activities which provided an interactive learning environment for students and staff. Students participated in weekly meditation sessions.

Success Stories:

Students participated in many well-being activities. Guided meditation was one of the students' top activities. Students who experienced anxiety expressed how the 10-minute mediation felt like only one minute. Students made a commitment to meditate at home.

Dokis First Nation

E-KNOOMAAGYANGWAA GI GEKENDAASJI (BEING TAUGHT BY KNOWLEDGEABLE ONES)

Target Audience:

Anishinabek students, other Indigenous students, non-Indigenous students, and educators of the Near North District School Board.

Project Summary:

This project’s focus was supporting Indigenous students’ well-being, transitions and safety, parent and community engagement, and educator capacity. Students had the opportunity to learn from cultural advisors, knowledge keepers, language keepers, Elders, and First Nation artists. Students received teachings from local community members who shared culturally appropriate lessons and activities throughout the year and at the Indigenous Youth Circle Retreat which took place in May 2023.

Students had the opportunity to share what they already knew, which enhanced their sense of identity and pride. The cultural teachings supported a culturally responsive and relevant learning environment. The cultural teachings supported efforts towards deconstruction, decolonization, and Indigenization.



Success Stories:

The E-knoomaagyangwaa gi gekendaasji project hosted three learning powwows at three local high schools in the Near North District School Board. The learning powwows allowed for Indigenous students to see themselves reflected in their school and built relationships with Indigenous role models.

One student who had been disengaged in school was so inspired by the learning powwow at EW Norman Public School, the student wanted to learn more about the drum and offered to assist in planning the Indigenous Day event. EW Norman Public School was supportive of this student’s desire to learn more about drumming. The student recruited other students who were interested in drumming and together they learned a song. These students then assisted with planning of the Indigenous Day event and presented their drum song at the Indigenous Day event.



Wasauksing First Nation

GIKENJIGWIN MIIKAAN - KNOWLEDGE PATH

Target Audience:

Indigenous Youth, educators, non-Indigenous students in grades Kindergarten to grade 12, and community members.

Project Summary:

The Gikenjigwin Miikaan - Knowledge Path project provided knowledge carriers in the mainstream classroom which infused Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum. As students transitioned from First Nation schools to provincial schools, the presence of Indigenous knowledge carriers in the school fostered cultural safety and encouraged youth to engage in learning experiences. This allowed youth to see themselves in healthy ways, reflecting cultural land appreciation, and learning beyond being survivors of residential school, day schools, or the 60s scoop.

Cultural knowledge teachings provided to students included:

- *seasons;*
- *hunting;*
- *harvesting;*
- *drumming;*
- *powwow;*
- *making shakers;*
- *beading; and*
- *stories.*

Success Stories:

Increase in attendance and cultural pride are two of the biggest impacts the Gikenjigwin Miikaan – Knowledge Path project had on students of Wasauksing First Nation. Several students who did not attend school regularly, began attending because of the cultural events that took place throughout the school year. One student in particular who received regular support from resources and attended all the cultural events, graduated as the Indigenous Trustee for the Near North District School Board.



Indigenous Curriculum Development

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg

LOCALLY BASED CURRICULUM

Target Audience:

First Nation students, First Nation communities, educators, and leadership.

Project Summary:

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg developed curriculum that is reflective of Anishinabek values, practices, and beliefs. Biigtigong Nishnaabeg's curriculum is an example of what can be accomplished. The curriculum embedded cultural expectations and ideas for Anishinabeg children to be able to learn as a part of their education experiences. The curriculum emphasized the use of parents, Elders, and community members. The curriculum addressed several areas, including: STEM, story telling, seasonal school year perspective, and assessment through an Anishinaabek lens.

The development of the curriculum serves as a template and example for other communities that want to embark on developing their own curriculum.

Success Stories

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg reported the curriculum has been implemented with great results. There has been an increase in Anishinaabemowin use, cultural knowledge, and connections with the community.

Atikameksheng Anishnawbek

ENSO BEBEZHİK MIINGOWEZWIN ADA'AAN ABINOOJINH PHASE 2

Target Audience:

Enso Bebezhik Miingowezwin Ada'aan Abinoojinh learners (senior group, intermediate group, and junior group).

Project Summary:

Atikameksheng Anishnawbek recognized there are fewer opportunities for children with special needs to get out of the classroom and into the bush for learning. To address this, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek developed Phase 2 of the Enso Bebezhik Miingowezwin Ada'aan Abinoojiinh ([Every Child has their Gifts](#)) project.

Phase 2 was designed to support children with special needs and exceptionalities to engage in earth learning. The learning was centered around Anishinaabe Kendaasowin and rich cultural and spiritual learning. The project included Anishinaabemowin language transmission.

The project brought three groups of learners with identified or suspected special needs and exceptionalities to the land monthly to engage in earth learning and to spend time in the akinoomoshin wiigwam (basecamp) with anishinaabemjig (language speakers) and anishinabe aadziiwin bemwjig (Anishinabek who carry Anishinabek ways of knowing). The program also visited an Equine Therapy Program situated in Wikwemikong four times throughout the year.

Success Stories

The basecamp for Enso bebezhiik miingowezwin ada'aan abinoojiinh was developed with the assistance of families and community members. The area was brushed out and the basecamp was finalized.

A schedule for learners to visit the site and share the program will be developed for the fall 2023 school year.

Land-Based Learning

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH LAND AND ONE ANOTHER THROUGH MANOOMIN

Target Audience:

Grade 8 students of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg.

Project Summary:

The land-based learning program offered by Biigtigong Nishnaabeg consisted of three days of harvesting wild rice, which included: traditional ceremony, harvesting the wild rice, roasting the wild rice, preserving the wild rice for storage, and hulling the wild rice. The goal of the program was to connect to a traditional way of life and values of the Anishinaabe people, by experiencing hands-on activities of harvesting and processing wild rice from an Indigenous perspective. Grade 7/8 students from Biigtigong Nishnaabeg and a senior class from the local public high school had the opportunity to experience this traditional activity from knowledge keepers and learn about the history, cultural teachings, and the science behind wild rice. This program brought families together and participants learned about the specific roles for each family member.

Success Stories

Students were very engaged and worked hard to prep materials to harvest the wild rice. Students showed a keen interest in revitalizing the tradition of wild rice harvesting and the nutrition that wild rice can provide families and the community. Staff and students would like the opportunity to network with other communities practicing traditional harvesting. Exchanging natural gifts of sustenance with other communities would be a great opportunity.

Zhiibaahaasing First Nation

AAMBE KINA WEYA

Target Audience:

Children, youth, and young adults of the community.

Project Summary:

Zhiibaahaasing recognized the importance of the Anishinaabe's connection to the land. Through land-based activities, the Aambe Kina Weya project assisted in re-establishing participants's connection to the land. Participants learned about Anishinabek culture, Anishinabek story telling, traditional sports, traditional crafts, traditional teachings on fire fasting and berry fasting, and land-based survival such as shelter building, traditional food harvest, and canoeing.

Success Stories:

Community members, families, children, and Elders participated in the Aambe Kina Weya camp. The camp consisted of land-based learning, traditional teachings, shelter building, fire making, canoeing, traditional sports, traditional crafts, and ended in a community feast.

"It was very rewarding to see a young boy catch his first fish and the proud look on him was priceless."
Camp Coordinator, Aambe Kina Weya, Zhiibaahaasing First Nation

Aamjiwnaang First Nation

FOSTERING SENSE OF SELF THROUGH LAND-BASED LEARNING

Target Audience:

Grade 6 students of Aamjiwnaang First Nation.

Project Summary:

Aamjiwnaang First Nation developed the program *Fostering a Sense of Self through Land-Based Learning* to reduce bias and perceptions of non-Indigenous students as well as foster connections and relationships between Indigenous families and the school system.

Aamjiwnaang First Nation and the Lambton Kent District School Board found that many students became disengaged with school around grade 6, which then carries through to secondary school. The premise of the project was to promote early intervention and engagement with students, while supporting identity, self awareness, removing/addressing bias, and increasing opportunities for positive connections with the secondary school.

Some of the land-based activities that have taken place were:

- *photographs of medicine plants for use in the classroom;*
- *survival skills and crafts;*
- *acquiring skill of traditional food preparation;*
- *engagement in lacrosse; and*
- *appreciation of the land, drum, and self.*

Success Stories:

Aamjiwnaang First Nation reported a consistent increase in attendance across students in the classroom as well as engagement in subject content, specifically those connected to land-based learning activities. One student at the beginning of the year would text her mom indicating that she hated the teacher, school, and did not know what she was doing in class. By December, the student was engaged in class, offering answers, and asking questions. The student's sense of confidence and comfort increased tremendously through land-based learning activities.



Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek

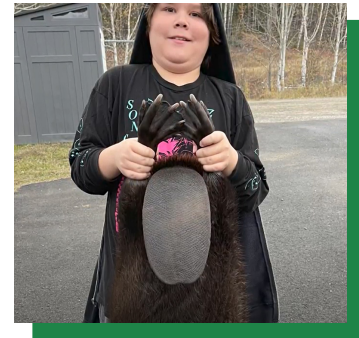
LAND-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

Target Audience:

Primary and elementary school aged children.

Project Summary:

This project provided a full-time dedicated language and land-based program for students in the community. The goal of the Land-Based Learning Program was to provide a sense of belonging, calmness, nutrition, and respect for Mother Earth.



Teachings and land-based learning included:

- tobacco teachings,
- fall shelter building
- fire teachings
- smoking/drying of fish
- medicine walk
- tracking a moose
- processing a moose
- moose hide tanning
- traditional games
- partridge hunting
- construction of hand drums
- trapping fur bearing animals
- beading
- craftsmanship of a medicine pouch
- snowshoeing
- traditional winter games
- open fire cooking
- planting of medicinal plants
- story telling and sharing circles
- processing waterfowl for food consumption
- duck and goose calling for hunting purposes
- snaring/spearing/gill netting of fish for food consumption
- gill net mending
- ceremonial dance and feasts
- Anishinaabek language immersion

Success Stories:

The Cultural Coordinator for the Land-Based Learning Program reported a notable difference in students in the classroom versus students out on the land. The energy and demeanor of the students change. They were happy, engaged, and eager while out on the land.

Students harvested fish via gill nets and they trapped animals via snares and traps. They also learned the importance of managing their harvesting – not to take more than what they need. The students were proud to share their catch with the community.



Aamjiwnaang First Nation

ANISHINAABE LEARNING LODGE

Target Audience:

All students and staff of Lambton Kent District School Board and Indigenous communities.

Project Summary:

Aamjiwnaang First Nation built an Anishinaabe Learning Lodge. Parents, families, and First Nations' organizations came together to learn Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe ways of life, and to celebrate self identity. Students and community assisted with the design and building of the Lodge.

The learning included: STEM land-based techniques incorporating Indigenous world view, traditional Indigenous knowledge, learning western models, and systems taught on the land by Indigenous knowledge practitioners. Further, the project included field trips, such as: medicine walks, creating medicine gardens, skinning and tanning hides, and boiling sap into sugar.

Success Stories:

The Anishinaabe Learning Lodge got students out of their shells. Aamjiwnaang First Nation saw an increase in attendance, student participation, cultural knowledge, and more engagement with peers. Aamjiwnaang First Nation noted one student that was introverted and reserved, participated in the construction of the Anishinaabe Learning Lodge, opened-up, and they were more engaged and social with the staff and students.

The construction of the Anishinaabe Learning Lodge brought the community together. Grandparents shared stories in Anishinaabemowin. Elders, children, parents, and grandparents participated in construction and building the first fire in the Lodge, which was a monumental event. Further, the Anishinaabe Learning Lodge has served as an alternative place for students that face hardship in the classroom.

The Anishinaabe Learning Lodge was used for the following traditional teachings and gatherings:

- *ceremonies;*
- *black ash basket making;*
- *porcupine quilling;*
- *powwow singing and dancing;*
- *birch bark etching;*
- *naming ceremonies;*
- *traditional funerals;*
- *youth symposiums; and*
- *corn festivals.*



Academic Advisors/ Student Supports

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg

SECONDARY STUDENT SUCCESS COORDINATOR

Target Audience:

Grade 9 students of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg.

Project Summary:

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg has approximately 24 students who left Biigtigong Nishnaabeg to attend high school in Marathon. The high school has no teachers or other staff that are community members or Anishinaabeg that can relate to the students. To support these students, Biigtigong Nishnaabeg developed the Secondary Student Success Coordinator to work with students, meet with teachers, make referrals, be a link to the community and school staff.

Success Stories:

Parents are more informed and engaged with their child's education when there is an advocate/middle person for students at Marathon High School. Students feel more comfortable knowing there is a safe space for them to express themselves, practice their culture, have someone to speak to, and have someone who advocates for them. Biigtigong Nishnaabeg has noticed an increase in attendance, credits achieved, stronger relationships with staff and educators, increase in graduation rates, and increase in connections with the community.

Students of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg achieved 86% of their credits. Biigtigong Nishnaabeg had 4 students graduate high school in 2023.

Moose Deer Point First Nation

NOOKMIS PROGRAM

Target Audience:

Infants, toddlers, children, and early learning centre staff.

Project Summary:

The Nookmis Program provided an Elder at the daycare that supported the Early Childhood Educator workers throughout the week. Early learners had the opportunity to hear, see, and experience Anishinaabe culture and language. The Nookmis Program provided a loving and nurturing spirit which fostered a positive attitude and learning experience. The Nookmis Program shared knowledge of the Anishinaabemowin, Moose Deer Point's history, culture, and ways of being. This was a major shift from the "*institutional approach to childcare*" to nurturing hands-on love, which typically does not happen in schools.

Success Stories:

The Nookmis Program at Moose Deer Point's daycare was a success. Staff of Moose Deer Point daycare reported an increase in attendance, stronger relationships with daycare staff, an increase in Anishinaabemowin use, an increase in cultural knowledge, more connections with the community, and more trust with the daycare workers. The children responded well to the Nookmis Program and looked forward to the Nookmis' visits. The parents appreciated the Nookmis Program and described it as giving a *"home away from home feeling"*.

Long Lake #58 First Nation

BIMAADIZOWIN CENTRE WELLNESS WORKER

Target Audience:

Students from grades 5 - 8 who meet the criteria for the Bimaadizowin Centre.

Project Summary:

Long Lake #58 First Nation designed a Wellness Program at Migizi School which is reflective of the Medicine Wheel. Within the program, the Medicine Wheel and parental input were used as a guide to develop Individualized Action Plans for students. The Wellness Program also ensured collaboration with the teacher, wellness worker, and the land-based activities instructor.

The Wellness Program included a strong emphasis on the history of Long Lake #58 First Nation and on building relationships for students and families.

Monthly activities that took place throughout the program included *sharing meals prepared by the students with parents and community members, land-based outings, and traditional ceremonies.*

Success Stories:

Long Lake #58 First Nation reported that students attend more and are more engaged in school if land-based and cultural activities are offered. The community was pleased to report that they reached more students this year, versus last year, with respect to wellness programming. The Wellness Coordinator offered programming at every class, which focussed on healthy sleeping habits, hygiene, healthy teeth and mouth, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self care.

Some of the land-based activities that took place throughout the year included:

- *teachings from Elders on how to properly clean small game animals;*
- *fishing events;*
- *sporting events;*
- *hunting sharing circles;*
- *snaring; and*
- *ceremonies.*

Language

Magnetawan First Nation

LANGUAGE CAMP

Target Audience:

Senior Kindergarten to grade 12 students of Magnetawan First Nation.

Project Summary:

Magnetawan's Language Camp promoted connections between youth and their language. The Language Camp introduced the students to fluency by way of cultural activities, song, and dance. Students engaged in language activities along side their parents and caregivers, Elders, and family members. The Language Camp offered different language stations throughout the community, such as a beading station, moccasin station, drumming and singing in the teepee station, painting station, and reading in the library station.

Success Stories:

Healing is needed for our First Nation's people. An Elder stated there are *blockages to learning Anishinaabemowin due to intergenerational trauma from Indian Residential Schools, 60's Scoop, Indian Day Schools, etc.* Magnetawan First Nation implemented healing practices into their Language Camp to combat this. Students responded well to the language teacher. Students were engaged and willing to speak Anishinaabemowin out loud.

Beausoleil First Nation

ANISHINAWBEMOWIN MOTIVATOR

Target Audience:

All ages of Beausoleil First Nation members on and off reserve.

Project Summary:

The Anishinawbemowin Motivator program in Beausoleil First Nation responded to the requests of youth for their identity and language to be openly taught. The Anishinawbemowin Motivator program addressed loss/grief, supported youth identity, encouraged reconnection to language, and created a safe space for youth and the community of Beausoleil First Nation to regain the language.

The Anishinawbemowin Motivator program incorporated:

- *community gatherings;*
- *feasts;*
- *language events to connect the Elders with the community;*
- *knowledge keepers;*
- *online Anishinawbemowin bingo;*
- *virtual language meets;*
- *virtual Anishinawbemowin scavenger hunt; and*
- *an Anishinawbemowin youth gathering.*

Success Stories:

The Anishinawbemowin Motivator program has been a huge success in Beausoleil First Nation. The person chosen to take the role was young, motivated, and energetic which contributed to the success of the project. Beausoleil First Nation members - on and off-reserve - participated in an abundance of activities throughout the year to motivate members to learn, speak, and share Anishinawbemowin. Beausoleil First Nation reported a record amount of participation in events and more people reaching out for language resources.

Reclaiming Anishinawbemowin is powerful. Beausoleil First Nation reported that children in the community are *closer to being fluent than their parents*. More adults and parents have reached out to the program, excited to learn, just like the children.



"We went on a nature walk with the children to identify animals and plants in Anishinawbemowin. One of the words was "kyaashk" which means seagull in Anishinawbemowin. A few months after this walk, I saw that same child, she looked up at the sky and yelled "kyaashk!". This was a success story of how the Anishinawbemowin Motivator program creates a safe environment for our children to use the language in their daily lives. This child had struggles with pronouncing her words, but after a few months, she spoke with so much confidence."

Jillian Smith, Anishinawbemowin Motivator, Beausoleil First Nation

Youth Leadership

Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg First Nation

YOUTH HAVE A VOICE

Target Audience:

Youth of Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg First Nation.

Project Summary:

This project, Youth Have a Voice, gave students a voice to express their opinion on how they can help create a path of respect and understanding. The youth gathered two days per month and listened to guest Elders from various First Nations sharing histories, cultures, perspectives, languages, and traditional Anishinaabe knowledge passed down by ceremony or conversation.

Youth met with a professional team. Through inquiry activities, a five-year strategic plan was created by the youth to show how to improve and create a linear path to their career while keeping their language, culture, and history at the heart and the root of the plan.

Nipissing First Nation

INDIGENOUS YOUTH RETREAT

Target Audience:

Nipissing First Nation secondary students.

Project Summary:

The Indigenous Youth Retreat was a land-based project that engaged **30** students who were enrolled in the Indigenous Studies courses at St. Joseph Scollard Hall, in North Bay, Ontario. Throughout the project, students acquired a solid understanding of the relationship of Indigenous people and Canada, as a province and a country.

The Indigenous Youth Retreat helped students develop the tools, strategies, knowledge, and habits of mind that will enable them to value equity and inclusiveness, effect change, contribute to building healthy and prosperous communities in a rapidly globalizing society, and support strong partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and governments in Canada.

The four-day retreat included Nipissing First Nation self-ID students, Indigenous self-ID students, and non-Indigenous students. The goal of the Indigenous Youth Retreat was to connect one cohort of students with land-based education for the Indigenous Studies program at St. Joseph Scollard Hall. Each day was designed to teach students about traditional Anishnaabe teachings, cultural teachings, colonization and decolonization (residential schools and land-based education), ceremonies, and traditional craft making.

Day one provided the students with Nishnaabeg history of the people as told by an Elder from Nipissing First Nation and traditional teachings of the sacred fire and traditional shaker making.

Day two provided history of the Nishnaabeg people such as, the creation story as well as Elder traditional teachings of the medicine wheel, and 13 moons on the turtles back.

Day three provided understanding of colonization and decolonization and sweat lodge ceremony.

Day four provided current realities and bridging worldviews together in society. Students worked to build a plan to infuse their learning into the school and community. The students were interviewed using technology to capture youth voice, Elders, and presenters throughout the four days to build a repository.

Success Stories:

Nipissing First Nation in partnership with the North Bay-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board and St. Joseph Scollard Hall have taken a proactive approach to providing Anishinabek youth with a better understanding of themselves as Anishinabek people.

The Indigenous Youth Retreat had **40 students** attend the four-day retreat at Nipissing First Nation. Students learned about the culture, history, and language of Anishinabek people. The Retreat had such a big impact on the students of St. Joseph Scollard Hall, that the students took it upon themselves to create their own Drum Group and conduct their own traditional stand-up election.



Students reported that they made personal connections to advance their understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures, built respectful and reciprocal relationships to support reconciliation between Indigenous people and Canadian society, are more culturally competent, feel more connected to their culture, have a higher self-esteem, increased attendance, increase in credits achieved, stronger relationships with teachers and staff, and increase in Anishinaabemowin use.



“Our students have become leaders, allies, and advocates for change in Indigenous perspectives within the school. Students who took the Indigenous Youth Retreat are finding growth in self-esteem and self-confidence to help lead many different learning opportunities within the school.”

Tory Fisher, Teacher, St. Joseph Scollard Hall – Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat.

“It was a really positive feeling to reconnect myself to Mother Earth. I am glad I was able to do it through a school program.”

Student, Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat.

“I already knew what our ceremonies were before the retreat, but every time I am at a ceremony, I always feel like I’ve learned something and feel more connected.”

Student, Nipissing First Nation, Indigenous Youth Retreat.

Aamjiwnaang First Nation

SECONDARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Target Audience:

Grade 9 - 12 secondary students of Aamjiwnaang First Nation.

Project Summary:

In the Secondary Youth Leadership project, students decided on what they wanted to learn about while building relationships and a safe environment within the school and the community. They learned with Elders and Knowledge keepers, developed leadership skills, cultural competency, and peer-to-peer relationships.

Students engaged in learning cycles, which began with a group leadership experience - learning from a local knowledge keeper on a topic specifically chosen for the group (for example, residential school). The group then planned how to raise awareness for the larger youth leadership group and plan awareness on the topic to the school community. In the next cycle of learning, the group decided and planned how they wanted to act on what they learned about their topic. This built youth leadership across the school. In the final cycle, the group reflected on their experience of learning and awareness. They also thought forward on the learning needs and successes of the cycle and planned for the next cycle of learning.

Success Stories:

A sense of belonging and a sense of connectedness – these are the feelings the students described after the Secondary Youth Leadership program began at their high school.

Students participated in several career mapping activities. One of these career mapping activities led to a student breakthrough in post-secondary selection and career path.



Aamjiwnaang First Nation reported an increase in:

- *self-esteem, well-being;*
- *attendance;*
- *credits achieved;*
- *student engagement;*
- *skills development;*
- *Anishinaabemowin use;*
- *relationships building;*
- *confidence;*
- *identity development;*
- *parental engagement;*
- *learning growth'*
- *cultural knowledge; and*
- *trust built with educators and staff.*

Community Projects

Wahnapiatae First Nation

COMMUNITY PROFILE BOOK/TEACHER'S GUIDE

Target Audience:

Students, First Nations, libraries, governments, organizations, and provincial schools.

Project Summary:

This project is intended to help students who attend provincial schools in the area to gain a better understanding of the history and culture of Wahnapiatae First Nation. The Community Profile Book is a tool that will promote a greater understanding of the Wahnapiatae First Nation in classrooms and help make the school curriculum more accurately reflect the history and experiences of the community. The Community Book will also be a tool that celebrates Wahnapiatae First Nation, will showcase the features that make Wahnapiatae First Nation unique, and highlight some of the characteristics (geographical and historical) that link Wahnapiatae First Nation to other communities in Regional Education Council 3.

Success Stories:

The community book is under development and is anticipated to have a positive impact on the community. The development of the book has supported the collection of community history, photos, and stories.

Dokis First Nation

COMMUNITY PROFILE BOOK/TEACHER'S GUIDE

Target Audience:

Students, First Nations, libraries, governments, organizations, and provincial schools

Project Summary:

This project is intended to help students who attend provincial schools in the area to gain a better understanding of the history and culture of Dokis First Nation. The Community Profile Book is a tool that will promote a greater understanding of the Dokis First Nation in classrooms and help make the school curriculum more accurately reflect the history and experiences of the community. The Community Book will also be a tool that celebrates Dokis First Nation, will showcase the features that make Dokis First Nation unique, and highlight some of the characteristics (geographical and historical) that link Dokis First Nation to other communities in Regional Education Council 3.

Success Stories:

The community book is under development and is anticipated to have a positive impact on the community. The development of the book has supported the collection of community history, photos, and stories.







KINOOMAADZIWIN EDUCATION BODY

Copyright 2024

Publication produced by the Kinooaadziwin Education Body.

Any duplication of this document without prior permission of the Kinooaadziwin Education Body is prohibited.

For copies, please contact:
Kinooaadziwin Education Body
100 - 132 Osprey Miikan
North Bay, ON P1B 8G5
705-845-3634
aes-keb.com

