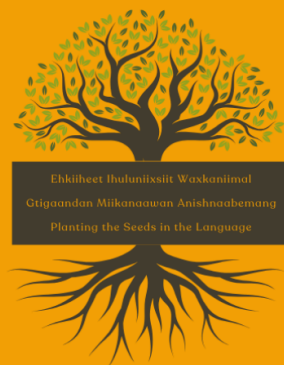# KEB Language Strategy Framework

Prepared by the KEB Language Strategy Team

Project Description

Background

Between 2018-2019, the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) engaged in collaborative efforts with the Participating First Nations. A draft framework was developed through consultations with communities, outlining an eight-pronged approach to language revitalization across eight work areas: immersion, learning the language program, curriculum/resource development, language camps/grassroots, online, school boards, teacher training, and apps.

In 2022, the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body received a multi-year comprehensive grant to enhance language revitalization and reclamation within the Anishinabek Education System (AES.)

By 2023, our language team was established, we hired a Language Strategy Project Coordinator and four regional officers, the Anokijiig, to develop a 10-year strategy. We then initiated extensive engagement with the Participating First Nations through surveys and community consultations.

As the work progressed, we combined the "Online" and "Apps" prongs into a single "Online Learning" category, refining the framework to seven prongs.

Our Strategic Priorities

Our language strategy is designed to increase the prevalence of our languages spoken in schools, homes, and among families. It addresses the need for community engagement and teacher support, as well as curriculum enhancement within our K-12 environment.

The strategy aims to promote Anishinaabemowin and Lunaapeew languages in educational settings to foster cultural expression and enhance students' language abilities. It targets four key focus areas through seven strategic prongs:

Four Key Focus Areas

1. Creating teachers and immersive learning opportunities;

2. Building capacities for intergenerational transmission through school programs and curriculum;

3. Fostering collective action across the Anishinabek Education System; and

4. Engaging learners in the digital world.

Seven Strategic Prongs

- Immersion
- Curriculum
- School Boards
- Online Learning
- Language Camps

- Language Learning Programs
- Teacher Training

Scope and Methodology

Our objective is to develop a comprehensive, action-oriented language strategy that offers a clear roadmap for revitalizing Anishinaabemowin and Lunaapeew languages within the AES over the next ten years.

Methodology

Engagement

To understand the desires and capabilities of the Participating First Nations, two language surveys were created and conducted between January and April 2024. One survey targeted students while the other focused on community members, with over 500 participants completing the surveys. The Anishinabek Nation adopted and distributed the same survey to First Nations outside the AES and achieved a similar response rate.

The Anokijiig team conducted field visits and community language assessments within each Participating First Nation to capture the current state of language use in each community. Identified community champions, who are prominent figures promoting and using the language within our communities were also connected with to enhance the engagement process to inform the draft strategy. Utilizing "A Guide to: An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages: A Tool for First Nations Language Revitalization" from the Assembly of First Nations and a modified Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, the team evaluated

community requirements and assets. The Anokijiig carefully examined the existing resources and the prevailing condition of language within the Participating First Nations, noting community strengths and areas of need.

Analysis

In June, the language strategy team and senior management of the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body convened. During the initial session, the team examined and evaluated the fieldwork and survey findings in alignment with the 8-Prong Framework for language revitalization developed by KEB in 2018-2019. In the second session, the group delved deeper into the analysis, recognizing that the 'online' and 'apps' prongs could be merged into the 'Online Learning' prong. They further analyzed the data to establish local and systemic support measures, delineating the objectives associated with the revised 7 Prongs.

Future Consultation

By late August and September 2024, the Anokijiig will share the draft strategy with Participating First Nations for review and further consultation. Virtual sessions will also be conducted to present the draft to Participating First Nations and key stakeholders (i.e. language teachers, post-secondary education program representatives, language program facilitators, etc.)

Final Approval & Publication

By October 2024, the draft will be presented to Participating First Nations for final approval. Once approved, it will be published, printed, and extensively distributed while being supported by a comprehensive communication strategy for promotion.

Your Input, Our Actions: A Collaborative Response

Preserving indigenous languages is crucial for maintaining cultural identity, fostering community connections, and enhancing cognitive development in learners. We heard certain themes over and over again when connecting with community members and language experts.

You said:	We will:
Kindness is the highest priority	We will entrench kindness as the foremost tactic to every strategy goal.
Ceremony must be integral	We will build capacities and partnerships to increase the use of culture and ceremony in education systems where our children are attending.
We work in silos when collaboration amongst all partners is required	The KEB will mobilize regional language collaborations as well as work with and build existing capacities for schools and communities to connect to PFN families in language learning.

The Ontario curriculum is outdated, there needs to be new standards that address varying proficiency levels	The KEB will focus on the development of First Nation led curriculum products and increase the capacity for PFN voice by building on our regional infrastructure.
Intergenerational transmission and the engagement of families in language learning is crucial for language revitalization.	The KEB will respond to the need to support language activities that go beyond the classroom and K–12. We will focus our work on family engagement and intergenerational transmission. We will develop and strengthen school approaches that work in tandem with community language supports.
A focus on fun and games is important when engaging all levels in language learning.	We will use fun and games to create programming and curriculum that can be accessed by multiple groups and will target family participation in language learning and use at home.

Seven Prong Framework

Prong	Reasoning and Goals
Language Learning	Create a program that can be adapted to different systems, communities, and generations, providing various entry points for language instruction. Our goal is to establish a language learning program that highlights family engagement and cross-generational participation.
Curriculum Development	Encourage the creation of updated curriculum by collaborating with the Ministry of Education and organizations that are already working on language and cultural curriculum development.
Language Camps	Develop capacity through family-oriented language camps, and invite collaboration with community

	members, families, and health service providers.
Online Learning	Focus on enhancing curricula to foster intergenerational learning. Create games, applications, and virtual reality experiences that engage. Promote youth engagement with the environment through digital activities and school-wide initiatives.
School Board Support	*Make sure there are well-defined channels for meaningful communication between First Nations and school boards regarding language programs and outcomes.*
Teacher Training	Establish guiding regional language circles to provide leadership and direction. Expand partnerships with post-secondary education institutions for the recruitment of language teachers and their professional development.

	Facilitate and assist in the coordination of locally developed immersion training programs for teachers.
Immersion Programs	Engaging in immersive environments is commonly regarded as the most effective method for language acquisition. The objective is to create immersive settings that foster fluency among speakers and enabling more speakers to partake in immersive learning experiences.

High-Level Language Strategy (Draft)

Language Learning : Miigwe'aadiziwin (Generosity)

We will collaborate with communities to create adaptable programs for students, foster language skill development within families, and bolster adult education support.

Participating First Nations can:	KEB system-wide support:
1. Implement adult learning programs and community activities supported by the KEB. 2. Participate in regional language councils to ensure strategies and activities are First Nation led.	3. Regional capacity building to support First Nation activities and participation. 4. Developing a language learning program that utilizes diverse media tools and emphasizes the integration of the language program with daily life. 5. Strategies for promoting and communicating the language in a way that normalizes its use.

By 1 year: The KEB has developed a framework for a language learning program that builds capacity. Regional capabilities have been enhanced to support the advancement of adult learning at the community level. A Lunaapeew language advisory table has been established. A

communication plan for normalizing language use has been developed and approved. Success targets have been set.

By 3 years: The KEB Language Program, featuring multiple entry points tailored for diverse audiences such as students, families and adults, has been developed and piloted for swift deployment across schools in the system. Key performance indicators* show favourable results.

By 5 years: Review and redesign of the Language Learning Program, along with resetting goals and performance indicators.

By 10 Years: AES Language Learning program is a provincial standard and supporting further curriculum and Anishinaabemowin/Lunaapeew teacher development.

*Refer to the 'Performance Indicators & Standards of Success' section of this document for examples.

Curriculum Development : Debwewin/Weelaamweet (Truth)

We will support the creation of an updated curriculum and establish connections with organizations already working on language and cultural curriculum development.

Participation First Nations can:	System Level support:
1. Encourage family engagement 2. Collaborate within the region	1. Curriculum Development 2. Develop and manage a

and with system initiatives 3. Participate in digital capture of speakers and identification of existing resources for digital resource library	language Resource Repository 3. Advocacy and participation in updating the Ontario curriculum 4. Establish system-wide benchmarks and assessment tools

By year 1: Funding and resources have been secured, and the system and regions have developed a digital plan to capture first speakers that has been approved.

By year 5: A comprehensive library/repository of curriculum resources including a dialect library is available within the PFN's and to Anishinaabemowin language teachers through out the province. The KEB has established a key role in the development of an updated Ontario Native Language curriculum.

By year 10: The KEB has uplifted Indigenous curriculum and aided in its development with regional and community support

Language Camps : Dibaadendiziwin/Noontayeelunsiit (Humility)

Organize an annual system-wide language event within AES encompassing cultural instruction, land-based methodologies, immersive environments, and guest speakers from various regions across the system.

Participation First Nations can:	System Level support:
1. Define the ceremonies that belong in language learning for their community 2. Host camps by partnering with local health and family teams	3. Host regional gatherings 4. Capacity building for regional and first nation language camps and gatherings. 5. Develop partnerships (i.e. regional Indigenous organizations)

By year 1: The KEB has identified opportunities and Participating First Nation priorities for camps including people, place, and season.

By year 5: Language camps are being actively held through-out the system by the regions and communities.

By year 10: Local and regional language events have increased cultural, language, and ceremonial knowledge throughout the system

Online Learning : Aakodewewin/Meeskaniiteehaat (Bravery)

We will craft diverse online learning environments and applications.

Participating First Nations can:	System Level support:
1. Create engaging content and apps for students	4. Create apps that provide a variety of language learning

2. Support opportunities for teachers and students to build online resources
3. Increase the use of existing KEB on-line resources for learning

functions for both students and families.

5. Provide opportunities for teachers and students to build online resources
6. Create a communication strategy for apps and online repository to drive usage by language learners.

By year 1: An assessment of community aspirations and cultural objectives for digital learning has been completed. KEB will secure funding and partnerships to support technical requirements. There is an increase in the existing Kinoomaadziwin Education Body virtual secondary school language course enrollment.

By year 5: Digital resources have been developed piloted and tested are beginning to be in place for students K-12 for home and school. A language repository is accessed and contributed to regularly.

By year 10: Digital resources are in place supporting education systems, communities, teachers and learners.

School Board Support : Minwaadendamowin/Weeli-punawaat (Respect)

We are dedicated to establishing transparent and effective communication channels between First Nations communities and school boards.

Participating First Nations can:	System Level support:
1. Advocate for language priority in public systems in the DSB Indigenous Education Councils 2. Advocate for teacher and knowledge keeper compensation equality with partner school boards. Advocate for optimization of the student experience in language learning. 3. Create reciprocal relationships between schools and Participating First Nation communities	4. Advocate for language priority and a revised and standardized curriculum program in the public system and at the Provincial level 5. Advocate for students & teachers in teacher recruitment and retention, as well as effective student transition from First Nation to public systems. 6. Create scholarships and bursaries to drive language learning engagement

By year 1: We will have developed a comprehensive advocacy plan that is based on existing relationships that will foster pathways to positive working relationships across the system.

By year 5: Through policy initiatives, we have focused on facilitating the transition of First Nation students to public schools. This effort emphasizes the inclusion of language classes and cultural learning opportunities in all schools, fostering collaboration between communities and educational institutions.

By year 10: Culturally appropriate Anishinaabemowin/Lunaapeew courses

are a recognized mandatory Ontario Secondary School Diploma credit.

Teacher Training : Nibwaakawin/Leepwaat (Wisdom)

The strategy will consider and implement professional development opportunities that would be advantageous for educators across the AES spectrum.

Participating First Nations can:	System Level support:
1. Identify and encourage teacher candidates within their membership 2. Prioritize language learners seeking qualification. 3. Attend AES teacher forums and professional development opportunities.	1. Create pathways to certification 2. Build capacity within school systems to use Indigenous language throughout the school environment. In math classes and courses for example 3. Create standardized recruitment guidelines to support First Nation schools and public systems.
By year 1: The KEB will build and define language certification circles and participation. By year 5: The KEB has endorsed the creation of an Elders Circle to accredit language teachers collaborating with the Ontario Ministry of Education and	

Ontario College of Teachers.

By year 10: The KEB has enhanced the presence of Indigenous language instructors across all educational systems, improved the fluency of teachers, and implemented a new standard for Indigenous language usage in schools.

Immersion Programs : Zaagidiwin /Ehwaalaat (Love)

Enable culturally immersive First Nation-led spaces through holistic strategies and arrange avenues for capturing speakers' insights.

Participating First Nations can:	System level support:
1. Create locally developed opportunities and pathways 2. Increase opportunity for immersion for all within community 3. Collect digital copy of speakers	4. Create capacity for locally developed programs and events 5. Develop a comprehensive immersion tool-kit for communities and schools 6. Create capacity, acquire funding, and assist in the collect digital copy of speakers

By 1 year: We will provide awareness and support on language immersion programs currently in place. We will put in place administrative

components required to support immersion programs and activities developed by the PFN's and regions.

By year 5: Create a suite of immersion supports and toolkits to drive increases in community immersion activities and programs.

By year 10: The KEB has established a programming framework to enable the delivery of up to 10,000 hours* of language content, tailored for immersive programs designed for utilization by communities and educational institutions.

*Referring to Malcolm Gladwell's "10,000-hour rule," which suggests that achieving expertise in any skill requires 10,000 hours of dedicated practice.

The number 7 holds significant importance in Anishinaabe culture, with a history dating back to prehistoric petroglyphs. The Seven Grandfather Teachings remind us to live minobimaadizi, the good life. By relating the 7-prong framework to the Seven Grandfather Teachings, we ensure that this language plan is viewed through a culturally holistic lens, keeping Anishinaabemowin beliefs and values at the forefront of our work.

Implementation

Further details on the implementation of this strategy, including key performance indicators to measure the project's success, are currently under development and will be shared at a later date.

Cost

Further details regarding the financial resources needed to support the strategy's goals and activities are currently being developed and will be shared at a later date.

Performance Indicators & Standards of Success

To measure strategy effectiveness, align indicators with learning outcomes, Vision, and Mission statements of the Anishinabek Education System we will evaluate using various approaches. We will select indicators reflecting program objectives to assess effectiveness, make data-driven decisions, and showcase language investment value. Here are some examples of how performance will be evaluated:

- **Completion rates:** This measures the percentage of learners who complete a Language Learning program, this indicates community level of engagement and commitment.
- **Knowledge acquisition:** Assessing learners' knowledge acquisition is crucial in measuring program or strategy effectiveness. Pre- and post-activity assessments or quizzes can be used to evaluate the increase in knowledge and understanding.
- **Participating First Nation family & community feedback:** Collecting feedback from learners regarding their satisfaction, perceived usefulness, and relevance of the strategies provides valuable insights into the strategy effectiveness. Surveys or feedback forms can be used to gather this information.

- **Performance improvement:** Tracking indicators, such as productivity, quality, or student, family or community satisfaction, before and after strategy programs or activities helps assess the impact of the strategy on language acquisition and use. Comparing indicators can show us the effectiveness of the strategy.

- **Cost-effectiveness:** Evaluating the financial investment in language programs, including expenses related to content creation, delivery platforms, and knowledge keeper or professional fees, helps gauge the cost-effectiveness of the language initiatives. This measure considers the financial investment in training compared to the outcomes achieved. It involves analyzing activity costs, including development, delivery, and evaluation expenses, against the benefits gained.

- **Time to competency:** Measuring the time it takes for learners to achieve competency or proficiency in language use can indicate the efficiency and effectiveness of the strategy or activity.

- **Retention and transfer of learning:** Assessing learners' ability to retain and transfer knowledge and language skills to their school, home or work environment is critical in measuring the long-term impact of the strategy. Follow-up assessments or performance evaluations will help determine the retention and application of learning.

- **Return on Investment (ROI):** Evaluating the financial return on investment by comparing the strategy costs to the quantifiable benefits such as increased community, family and use of language in schools, or increased delivery throughout the system will help assess the overall effectiveness of the strategy or activity at hand.

- **Pre- and post-assessment scores:** We will measure how much language knowledge has been acquired and retained by comparing learners' performance before and after language learning strategies or activities.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Monitoring specific measures related to language use, such as activity engagement, meeting strategy timelines, or community and school satisfaction ratings, helps evaluate the impact of the strategy on actual outcomes.
- **Error Rates:** Tracking the frequency of errors or mistakes in content for example using irrelevant wording or tense errors provides insights into the effectiveness of training interventions.
- **Training Time**: Measuring the time required for learners to complete training modules or achieve desired fluency outcomes indicates strategy efficiency. Monitoring learners' time on language activities also provides insights into their active participation and interest.

For More Information

If you wish to connect further, please contact:
Greer Atkinson
Language Strategy Project Coordinator
Kinoomaadziwin Education Body
100-132 Osprey Miikan,
North Bay, Ontario, P1B 8G5
(705) 471-8808 or (289) 221-2714