



DIBAAJMOWIN

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Regional Education Council Highlights



Region 1

The new year has been busy!

Region 1 representatives have been putting together plans for promotional opportunities. The first of these will be a recurring weekly program on CFNO with Al Cresswell.

Each week, Al will highlight a First Nations community within the region to give listeners a more in-depth understanding of First Nations education. These sessions will air every Friday at 8:10 a.m. beginning April 4th through to the end of June.

Listen live at this link: [CFNO - Listen Live](#).

Region 2

Since August 2024, First Nations from AES Region 2—Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Aundeck Omni Kaning, Sheshegwaning, Whitefish River First Nation, and Zhiibaahaasing—and AES Region 3—Dokis and Wahnapiitae; along with Sagamok Anishnawbek and M'Chigeeng—have been working together to develop a draft Education Service Agreement (ESA) with the Rainbow District School Board (RDSB).

With guidance from the First Nations and the support of KEB staff, First Nation representatives carefully reviewed and refined the draft to ensure it prioritizes the needs of First Nation students and families attending RDSB schools.

The draft agreement has now been presented to RDSB and is under review. Once finalized, each community will move forward with signing its own individual agreement, strengthening education partnerships and ensuring a framework that supports student success.



Rainbow Schools

Region 3

Nbisiing Naadziwin Program (Nipissing First Nation) –

Students from Nbisiing Secondary School participated in an Advanced Wilderness First Aid certification program. This program provided the students with the necessary emergency response skills needed in the bush, along with survival and safety skills. In addition, students were taught traditional teachings to help them gain a deeper awareness of the lands. The program was 40 hours long.

Nbisiing sees these teachings and training as necessary to prepare the next generation to carry on our Anishinaabe traditions.



Region 4

The Education Department at Beausoleil First Nation has recently welcomed two new staff members.

Lynda Hoksbergen is the new Education Director. She is from Opaskawayak Cree Nation and is currently working towards a Master of Education from the University of British Columbia.

Charlene Frankavitz is the new Principal of Christian Island Elementary School. In a note to the community, Charlene expressed her commitment to “fostering an environment where every child feels valued, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.”

We welcome them both and look forward to working together.

Language and Culture



Learning Anishinaabemowin One Word at a Time

Cynthia Wemigwans, Language and Culture Lead for the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body, has been travelling to promote language initiatives through Professional Development Training, Teachers' Learning Circles, and carrying out a Pilot Project.

Each week, Cynthia visits the Shawanosowe School in Whitefish River First Nation to work with teachers and staff to support their increased language usage with students. Data collection is ongoing to determine if teachers are gaining fluency in teaching everyday commands. Resources have been developed, including flashcards and language lists for instruction.

Cynthia has encouraged the staff to speak one new word daily, bringing positive outcomes. Within the classrooms, the children can be heard speaking Anishinaabemowin with pride.

Creating a Thinking Classroom in Mathematics

In February and March, the KEB hosted three evening sessions with Dr. Peter Liljedahl, which were a great success!

A total of 90 educators from the Anishinabek Education System community schools and partnering district school boards were in attendance. The sessions were incredibly engaging, with Dr. Liljedahl presenting valuable strategies for creating a Thinking Classroom in mathematics, sparking deep and meaningful discussions.

Attendees shared positive feedback, particularly appreciating the practical tips and insights offered. "I first wanted to start off by saying GCHI MIIGWECH for this amazing opportunity," wrote one of our participants. "Peter is phenomenal, a guru! And his strategies tie so nicely for our students' culture and backgrounds. My goal is to begin implementing these ideas into our classrooms."



Virtual Secondary School Update



Marlo Beaucage recently joined the the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body in her role as Principal of the Virtual Secondary School (VSS).

This past semester, the Virtual Secondary School offered LNOAO Level A Ojibwe and LNOBO Level B Ojibwe. As a result, 40 students were successful and received one full credit to their high school transcript. In LNOAO, the highest achieving student obtained an overall average of 97% and in LNOBO, the highest achieving student received an overall average of 95%. Nishin!!

Currently, in the Virtual Secondary School, we have 74 students enrolled in LNOAO Level A and 12 students enrolled in LNOBO Level B. We are extremely proud of all of the students and their efforts to enhance their knowledge of Anishinaabemowin.

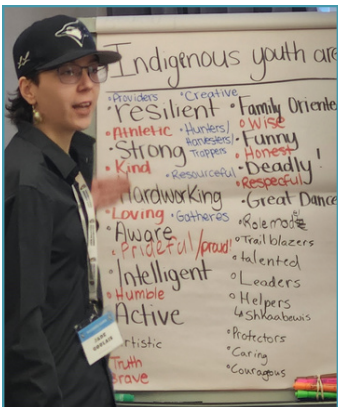
Winter Youth Gathering



The AES Youth Council successfully hosted the Youth Winter Gathering in North Bay from January 17th to 19th, 2025, bringing together 24 youth for a weekend of cultural learning and leadership development.

Participants engaged in a variety of enriching activities, including a guided Paint Night with local youth artist Sassa Linklater and an interactive workshop on cultural identity, personal growth, and “Everyone has a Spark” with George Couchie (Nipissing First Nation). The youth also reviewed the AES Reporting Racism Tool and collaborated on a social media campaign by identifying and celebrating the positive attributes of Indigenous youth. Additionally, they took part in Anishinabek cultural teachings with Perry McLeod (Nipissing First Nation).

The gathering provided a valuable opportunity for youth to strengthen their cultural knowledge, build leadership skills, and foster meaningful connections.



Anti-Racism Reporting Tool

The Anishinabek Education System (AES) recognizes that dealing with incidents of racism is a lived reality of Anishinabek communities, and as such, addressing racism is a key priority.

The AES Reporting Racism Tool was launched in January 2023.

Families, students, and community members can use the tool to safely and easily report incidents of racism taking place in schools and school-related activities. Once reported, with the consent of the person reporting, staff from the Kinooaadziwin Education Body (KEB) will respond.

The tool also provides the opportunity to track the types of incidents, identify themes and systemic issues, and further prioritize the shared responsibility in addressing racism.

You can help address racism happening at school by:

- bringing the incident to the attention of a trusted adult at school;
- bringing the incident to the attention of the Education Director at your First Nation; and
- using this link to report the incident: <https://aes-keb.com/addressingracism/>



The AES Youth Council have designed a key tag with QR Code as an easy-to-use and safe way to report an incident of racism.

When you provide information about the incident, KEB staff will respond within one business day. No information will be shared with anyone outside the Anishinabek Education System without consent. After the report is made, finding a resolution to the incident is the primary goal.

If anyone is more comfortable talking to someone over the phone, a call can be made to the KEB office at 705-845-3634.

This initiative was prioritized by Participating First Nations and supported by the Addressing Racism Committee, which includes representatives from the Regional Education Councils, the Kinooaadziwin Education Body (KEB), the Education Equity Secretariat and the Ministry of Education.

Language Strategy



Maajtaadaa ji-biskaabwidooying gdinwewininaa endaadaaying: "Let's start bringing our language back into our homes."

The KEB Family Immersion Gathering took place on February 15-16, 2025, and provided immersive spaces for language learners, teachers, and families from Region 2 and Region 3 communities in collaboration with Ninaatigoons Learning.

Workshops focused on language immersion, best practices for educators, and strategies for bringing Anishinaabemowin into the home. Child-focused sessions created a fun space for young learners, while keynotes from Alan Corbiere, Esbikenh, and workshops from engaging and passionate language champions emphasized the importance of reclaiming our language.

Miigwech to all who joined in this vital work.

Aambe Minwe Baapiidaa: "Come and Enjoy the Sounds of Laughter"

The Aambe Minwe Baapiidaa Fun and Games Conference on February 26-27, 2025, brought families, educators, and language learners together to explore Anishinaabemowin through play and immersion.

Keynote speaker Barbara Nolan emphasized the importance of fun in language learning, while Stan Wesley led the high-energy Tabahon Challenge. Workshops featured puppet storytelling, traditional games, music, and immersive teaching strategies, with sessions led by Chad Solomon, Dallas Sinopole, John-Paul Chalykoff, Cynthia Wemigwans, and others.

The Kids Zone created a space for young learners, and discussions focused on bringing Anishinaabemowin into homes and communities. We hope to continue providing language revitalization opportunities for families in the future.



Aambe Minwe Baapiidaa

Language and the Ngo Dwe Waangizid



Recently, I witnessed language in action and saw what underpins the Ngo Dwe Waangizid (One Anishinaabe Family).

Creating spaces for youngsters to engage in language is essential. We must work on building language nest-type spaces.

At our most recent event, Aambe Minwe Baapidaa, many speakers came from Wiikwemikoong to help. As I watched the speakers engaging and connecting through language with families and children throughout the two days, I saw One Anishinaabe Family. I didn't see designations or affiliations; I saw families joining a well-supported place for kids to hear our language.

Miigwech!

Greer Atkinson



Little NHL

From March 10-12, our team had the privilege of attending the Little Native Hockey League (LNHL) event in Markham, where we were excited to promote the Anishinabek Education System (AES). It was an amazing opportunity to connect with community members and share the various programs and services AES offers to Indigenous students.

We had the chance to engage in meaningful conversations and hear firsthand how families are working to bring Anishinaabemowin and Lunaape language back into their homes. It was inspiring to discuss ways they could learn together as a family and strengthen their cultural connections. The highlight of the event was the laughter shared during the Tabahon game - what a fun and interactive experience for everyone involved!

A heartfelt Miigwech to the Little Native Hockey League for having us. It was a truly memorable experience.

Photo (L-R): Eva, Lynn and Greer from KEB with Jordan Tootoo.

Virtual Speaker Series – Connor Lafortune

The Virtual Speaker Series provides Indigenous youth with opportunities to engage with inspiring youth leaders across the Anishinabek Nation. Through these online sessions, youth gain valuable insight into leadership, culture, and personal growth.

A recent session featured Connor Lafortune from Dokis First Nation, whose powerful words and storytelling resonated deeply with participants.



New Staff

Jacinta Shawanda

Anishinaabemowin Anokiit,
Region 3

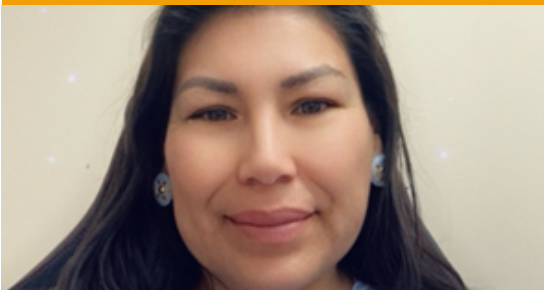


Darla Stinson

Anishinaabemowin Anokiit,
Region 4

Hannah O'Donnell

Anishinaabemowin Anokiit,
Region 1



Velma

Noah-Nicholas

Lunaapeew
Language Coordinator

Lynn McGregor

Anishinaabemowin Anokiit,
Region 2



Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund

The Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund is an annual grant established by the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) and the Ministry of Education. In 2023-2024, the Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund assisted 12 First Nations, including twenty-four projects impacting over 3,000 students across the Anishinabek Education System (AES).

KEB Communications will send a Call for Proposals electronically on Tuesday, April 8, 2025.

If you have questions about the Fund, join us for our Virtual Drop-in Sessions on:

- April 23, 2025, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM
- April 30, 2025, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM

There are also learning resources available on our website, such as:

- Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund Guidelines
- Proposal Template
- Practical Guide to Apply to the Fund (which includes a Sample Proposal)
- Project Booklet

You can find these resources at: <https://aes-keb.com/ng-fund/>

The deadline to apply to the Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund is **Friday, May 16, 2025**.

Niigaan Gdizhaami Forum

The 10th Annual Niigaan Gdizhaami Forum is approaching quickly! This year, the event will take place on April 8th and 9th at the Delta Hotel Waterfront in Sault Ste Marie.

The theme of the Forum this year is: Ka aadsookemi wii mshkogaabweyat e-shkiniijig / Niiloono ngihtaachiimihna li wuskii-lunaapeewak maskaniiteeheewak, which translates to "Building Future Leaders."

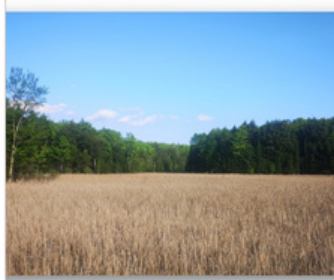
We've planned two days of presentations, discussion and collaboration to showcase and further the work on building future leaders across the Anishinabek Education System.



Be sure to check <https://aes-keb.com/employment-opportunities/> to see the latest employment opportunities!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Regional Education Council 4



May 7, 2025
Spring Meeting
Contact:
greer.atkinson@a-e-s.ca

Regional Education Council 3



May 14, 2025
Spring Meeting
Contact:
lisa.wabegijig@a-e-s.ca

Regional Education Council 2



May 21, 2025
Spring Meeting
Contact:
bonnie.nahwegahbow@a-e-s.ca

Regional Education Council 1



May 28, 2025
Spring Meeting
Contact:
kris.skworchinski@a-e-s.ca

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