



(Photo: Black River Wilderness Park, Chippewas of Rama First Nation)



DIBAAJMOWIN


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Message from the Director

Mino-ayaawin-bimaadiziwin,

We hope that this month provides each of you with an opportunity to connect with friends and family along with some peaceful time out on the land. Over the past few months, AES has focused on strengthening partnerships with First Nations and district school boards through Fall Regional Meetings hosted in each of AES's four regions.



Language initiatives continue to be a priority and over the past few months, our system has engaged in learning sessions with language teachers, virtual language bowls with students, and community discussions with local language committees.

We hope you enjoy the highlights included in this newsletter and look forward to connecting in 2026.

Newiyaal, Happy New Year.

Nancy O'Donnell, Director of Education



Regional Education Council Highlights



Regional Education Council 1

Region 1 had the distinct pleasure of welcoming Sandi Boucher along with education staff from Superior Greenstone District School Board, for Module 2 of the Ezhi Kendmang Anishnaabe Naadziwin 'Sharing the Knowledge of the People (EKAN) program. Due to uncertainty around ever-changing weather conditions, the session could not to be held in community but was instead, delivered virtually. The group engaged in learning based around several different topics designed to create a better understanding of the history of Indigenous people in Canada. The session included wonderful conversation and thoughtful, honest sharing of personal stories and connections.

Moving forward, EKAN will continue to be a focus for REC 1 as we move towards hosting Modules 3, 4, and 5 in the spring with the hope of delivering each session in different communities across Region 1.

Regional Education Council 2

The Region 2 Fall Meeting was held on October 15 and 16 at the Quattro Hotel and Conference Centre in Sault Ste. Marie. On Day 2 of the meeting, alongside district school board partners and Ministry Partners, Region 2 had an opportunity to highlight the Summer 2025 Reach Ahead Program. The course offered for students was *Politics in Action: Making Change (CPC 30)*. The first week of the program was delivered online, their second week consisted of an Ottawa field trip and on the final week they returned to online learning.

While in Ottawa, the students visited local sights and heard from Indigenous leaders; however, the highlight of the week was their attendance at the WAVES Global Indigenous Language Gathering. Students took part in interactive activities, heard from international language speakers and attended fashion shows and concerts. The peak experience of the week was the students being called up on stage to dance during The Halluci-Nation concert!

Sharing this highlight and hearing about the District School Board's summer offerings provided an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and activities. This information sharing may lead to future collaborations for the benefit of Indigenous students and education.



Plans are already underway for Reach Ahead 2026 so stay tuned!

Regional Education Council Highlights



(Photo source: Nibisiing School Facebook)

Regional Education Council 3

Nibisiing Redhawks make history – first time to compete in NDA basketball!

For the first time in the school's history, the Nibisiing students, known as the Nibisiing Redhawks Basketball Team, competed in the NDA (Nipissing District Athletics) game. In collaboration with their friends at Odyssee, the Redhawks stepped into the court to compete in their first official game as the Redhawks Nation!

This milestone marks a significant moment for Nipissing First Nation and its students — an opportunity that has been years in the making. There is great pride in all the athletes, coaches and those who have supported the growth of sports at Nibisiing Secondary School.

NDA brings together 10 high schools in the Nipissing region.

Regional Education Council 4

Connecting to Spirit, Elders and Educating Children

This year, the Regional Education Council Fall Meetings were hosted in Aamjiwnaang First Nation, where participants were welcomed each day in a good way by Elder Elizabeth Plain. Each morning, she lit and shared a smudge, offering thoughtful words that reminded us of the importance of connecting to spirit as we gather to do its work. This grounding practice helped set the tone for meaningful discussions and collaboration.

Language revitalization continues to be a central focus in REC 4. On the second day, Elder Elizabeth offered reflections on her own experiences with language in the public school system. She encouraged the group with the words, "There were a lot of questions about language and culture and how it was being taught in schools. Education has come a long way, and I applaud every one of you here that are addressing language and racism."



(Photo of Elder Elizabeth Plain)

The council is grateful to have Elders at our table—their guidance, experience, and generosity strengthen everything the council does.

Language Coordinator Updates

Region 1 Language Updates

The Region 1 Language Committee, Anishinaabemowin Niigaaniwag Committee, has confirmed March 26, 2026, as the date for the next Language Teacher Professional Learning Circle (PLC).

The upcoming PLC will feature amazing presenters from our Region 1 Nations who will share approaches to incorporating Anishinaabemowin into traditional learning, using a community-created daily Anishinaabemowin resource, creating immersion spaces, miiniwaa (*and*) creating games and learning resources through online programs.

Word lists, agendas, Teams link, miiniwaa bingo cards have already been distributed for the online language bowl on February 24th, 2026. The invite has been extended to District School Boards and First Nation schools. The word lists this time around will be Valentines Day, Winter Clothing, Storytelling, miiniwaa (*and*) Winter Hunting/Activities. The committee looks forward to more fun Anishinaabemowin learning in the New Year!

Region 2 Language Updates

In Region 2, there have been lots of Anishinaabemowin activities and initiatives taking place. On November 3, 2025, a Kweji Kinoomaagzidaa ("Let's Learn") session was held featuring the Chameleon Reader Anishinaabemowin language tool for use at home, in schools, and in the community, with a presentation by Nicole Van Stone. This was followed on November 20, 2025, by another Kweji Kinoomaagzidaa ("Let's Learn") session focused on the Chi Map Project, where Tammy Naponse shared the importance of using Anishinaabemowin to label traditional land spaces and preserve community stories and teachings.

A Professional Learning Circle took place at Osawamick G'tigaaning, offering a full-immersion experience centered on storytelling, traditional teachings, and hands-on crafting for teachers and community support workers. In addition, Anishinaabemowin language resource packages were prepared and distributed for Region 2 Partnering First Nation Education Departments and language support workers. On December 3rd, 2025, Partnering First Nation Education Directors and Managers came together for the Region 2 Anishinaabemowin Language Committee Development Meeting, collaborating on the development of the Terms of Reference for the Region 2 Anishinaabemowin Language Committee.

Looking ahead to 2026, upcoming initiatives include Language Champion and Elder video projects, ongoing committee and language camp support, a second Professional Learning Circle, and community-based language planning sessions. Miigwech to everyone contributing to the strength and growth of Anishinaabemowin in Region 2.

Language Coordinator Updates

Region 3 Language Updates

On Monday October 20th, the KEB Region 3 Professional Learning Circle (PLC) was held at the Holiday Inn in Sudbury. Ojibwe language teachers and other educators from First Nations and district school boards, attended the event. Every participant received a game or big story book to use in their classrooms.

Participants shared positive feedback following the session, including:

- *"Miigwech for organizing all was good. I really enjoyed having a fluent speaker at each table during breakout sessions."* - anonymous
- *"Was super easy to set up on my computer, and the right timeline for a class time (Gr.9). My students loved the family feud game because it was interactive, and they got to learn some words to memorize, to live their everyday life, learning the language."* – Lina D.

On December 5th, 2025, Dr. Deborah McGregor presented a Kweji Kinoomaagzidaa ("Let's Learn") webinar called "Anishinaabe Knowledge, Storytelling & Climate Change".

Upcoming Region 3 Events:

January 19th, 2026: Giselle McGregor will present a Kweji Kinoomaagzidaa talk on identity based on two books: *Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation* Book by Monique Gray Smith and *"Who We Are: Four Questions For a Life and a Nation"* by the late Murray Sinclair. The online webinar will take place from 6:00 PM -7:00 PM.

January 30th, 2026: Region 3 PLC Hybrid meeting based out of North Bay. If you teach Ojibwe language, you are welcome to pre-register by visiting this link or scanning the QR code: <https://forms.office.com/r/5ECnJA4ETf>



Region 3 PLC Meeting
Registration Link



Visit the Anishinabek Education System YouTube channel to view the most recent meeting recordings:

<https://www.youtube.com/@anishinabekeducationsystem5941>

Language Coordinator Updates

Region 4 Language Updates

Curriculum Working Team: The Curriculum Working Team continues to collaborate with SISCO, AES, and Rec 4 representatives to explore the development of resources that support existing curricula. Discussions also focused on how to start creating resources that will support existing curriculums. Discussions have also focused on land-based initiatives currently taking place in REC 4 communities. During the discussions, the team reflected on the importance of imagery and noted that all REC 4 communities share a strong connection to the water.

Community Connections: Language initiatives continue to strengthen community connections across Region 4. At Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, “Word of the Day” and “Phrase of the Day” recordings were completed as part of a five-day initiative designed to encourage community members to speak Anishinaabemowin. The initiative included a draw to increase participation, with words and phrases centered on tanning moose hide- which community loves connecting and doing together.

Connections have also been built with Rama First Nation through participation in a community bison harvest. This provided a valuable hands-on learning opportunity and an opportunity to connect with children and staff from Waasa Enaabijig and MKES, while naturally incorporating Anishinaabemowin into shared experiences.

Ongoing discussions continue with REC 4 communities, with meetings held both in person and virtually to ensure consistent engagement and collaboration.

Next Steps: The next phase will involve reaching out to communities to identify the types of curriculum and language resources they would like to see developed. A media post will also be shared to recruit an Elder and a youth to join the team in the new year.

Around the Home Labels: Work is underway to finalize gikendinaan (around-the-home) labels. These categorized, room-specific sticker labels will be distributed to families and will include Anishinaabemowin, English, and phonetic spellings to support pronunciation. The word list has also been shared with Velma to explore the inclusion of Lunaapeew language. Support is being provided to assist Velma in sourcing promotional items for the new Lunaapeew Language Working Group. Plans are also in place to connect with Georgina Island in the coming weeks.

Supporting with Lunaapeew Working Group: Ongoing support continues for the new Lunaapeew Language Working Group, including assistance with gathering event materials. A visit to Georgina Island is planned for December, prior to the winter holiday break.

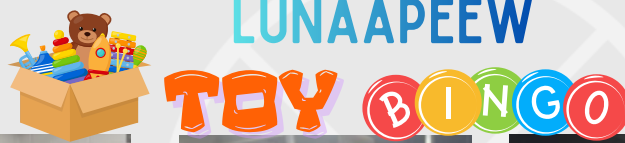
Language Coordinator Updates

Region 4 Language Update - Lunaapeew

A recent community engagement session was held to share survey results, which led to the formation of a **Lunaapeew Language Working Group**. The group now meets biweekly to plan and support language initiatives within the community. On December 8, Munsee hosted its very first Lunaapeew Language Toy Bingo, and photos from the event highlight strong community participation and engagement.

Several language initiative updates were shared, including the completion of twelve weeks of Lunaapeew language lessons, from September to November. The Lunaapeew Language Challenge launched on October 1 and has attracted a total of 47 participants. In addition, the first-ever Lunaapeew Professional Learning Circle (PLC) was held on October 10, 2025, at the Eelunaapeewi Lahkeewiit Early Learning Centre.

The Curriculum Working Team continues to collaborate with SISCO, AES, and REC 4 representatives to begin developing Lunaapeew language resources. The Lunaapeew virtual high school course also remains open for student registration and is scheduled to begin in the second semester.



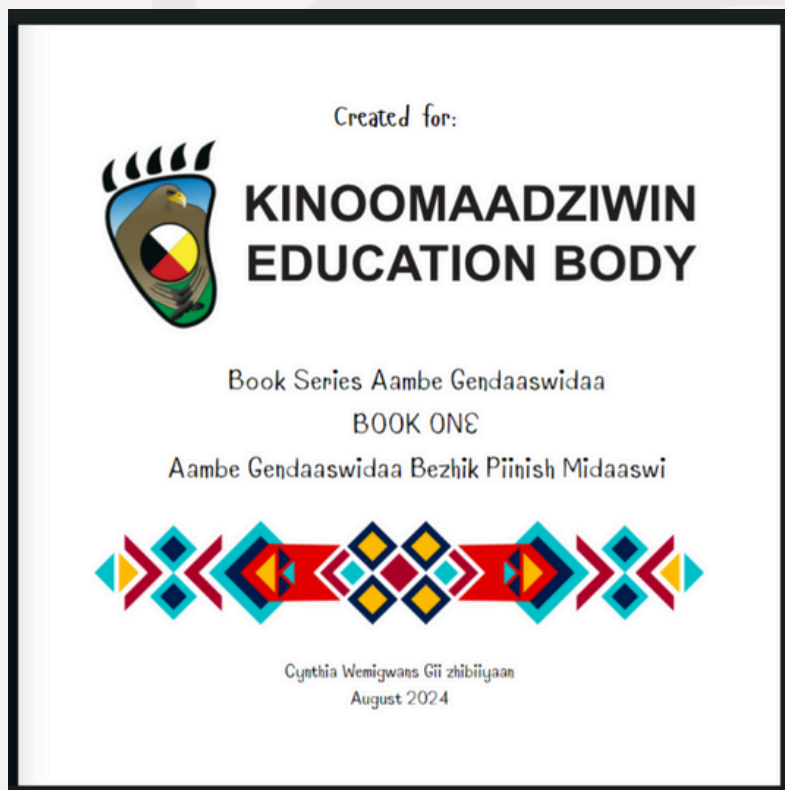
Language & Culture Lead Update

PILOT PROJECT

St. Joseph's Anishinaabek School – Chunking Method

The Pilot Project at St. Joseph's Anishinaabek School focuses on the use of the Chunking Method. Since the beginning of the school year, both in-person and virtual visits have been provided to coach and support the Anishinaabemowin language teacher in implementing Cynthia's Chunking Method. The teacher has completed the 'Naabiising, Maadzi/Gaawii Maadziisii, Kinoomaage Wesiinyak, and Aapiish?' chunks.

Students have been highly engaged in the learning process and are often unaware that they are receiving structured training in understanding, retaining, and learning the early stages of translation; through this approach, they are developing strong foundational skills in comprehension, retention, and early translation. The Anishinaabemowin language teacher at St. Joseph's Anishinaabek School also utilized the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body First Teacher Kit, Aambe Gendaaswidaa, when teaching the first chunk of the chunking method, Naabiising.



AES Language Portal



Scan the QR Code
or visit:
<https://tinyurl.com/LanguagePortal>

To view the full
Aambe
Gendaaswidaa
Books & other
language
resources.

Fall Regional Meetings

Fall Regional Meetings:

Anushiik, Miigwech to everyone who participated in the Fall Regional Meetings that took place across the AES this fall. The first day of each regional meeting provided an opportunity for the Regional Education Council representatives to discuss regional priorities, review regional data compiled from the Annual Learner Survey, share language initiatives, and enhancements to the Transition Protocol.

On the second day, the Regional Education Council representatives were joined by members of the Ministry of Education and partnering district school boards. Together, the group reviewed promising practices being developed to support communication between district school boards and the First Nations. The group also discussed trends and supports in place to address anti-Indigenous racism, and shared initiatives taking place during the 2025-2026 school year to support Anishinabek students.

A full report from the Fall Regional Meetings will be shared with the Regional Education Councils. Recurring themes that were brought up across the regions were:

- adjustments to the Annual Learner Survey to capture additional special education information and Early Years screening trends
- in-depth review of special education data and trends
- language teacher certification, recruitment and retention

The KEB looks forward to working alongside the Participating First Nations and partnering district school boards to action the items discussed at the Fall Regional Meetings.



Education Conference

The KEB held its first Education Conference on Tuesday, October 28th, at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The event brought together educators from all four regions, offering a valuable opportunity to learn, share, and connect.

Participants heard from keynote speaker Dr. Shelley Knott-Fife, who focused on Special Education, and engaged in hands-on workshops covering math, literacy, Anishnaabemowin, land-based curriculum, and traditional medicines.



Photos: Education Conference attendees participated in the 'Wiigwaas enaabajichigaadeg ji'agindaasowinikeng: We're Using Birch Bark to Do Math' workshop with Anika Guthrie and Dr. Ruth Beatty.

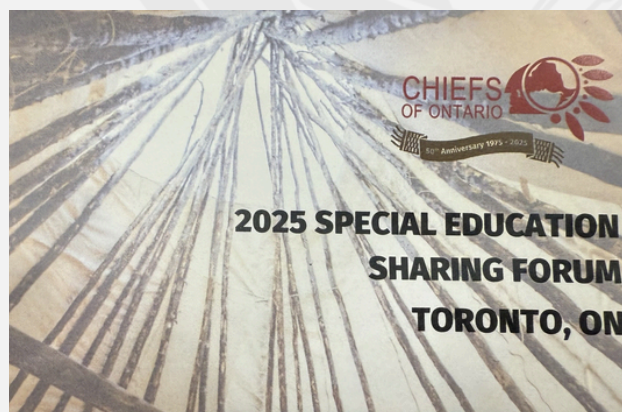
Multi-Year Action Plan Updates

KEB Staff Presented at the Chiefs of Ontario 2025 Special Education Sharing Forum

KEB Staff delivered a session titled “Reimagining the IEP,” aimed to create a collaborative space for participants to reflect on the challenges of the current IEP and explore opportunities to transform it into a student-centered, strengths-based document grounded in culturally responsive practices.

Drawing on the collective expertise in the room, participants worked together to envision a reimagined IEP, developing a framework and a practical template that communities can adapt and that district school boards may also choose to use.

These early discussions offered valuable preliminary perspectives, and the KEB looks forward to bringing these ideas to communities and engaging in further dialogue to help inform the next steps.



Multi-Year Action Plan Updates

The Data and Information Sharing Agreement (DISA)

The Data and Information Sharing Agreement (DISA) is a formal agreement between the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) and the Province of Ontario. This agreement enables First Nations and the KEB to access and utilize educational data to support evidence-based decision-making aimed at enhancing Anishinaabek student success and well-being.

The Data and Information Sharing Agreement (DISA) between the KEB and the Ministry of Education helps to outline the student success and achievement of Anishinabek students.

The information allows the KEB to:

- Make informed decisions, research, and funding priorities through pilot initiatives
- Customize professional development and learning to address and support student needs
- Assists in responsive teaching aligned with Anishinabek standards

**Scan the QR code
below to access
the virtual DISA
Consent Form**



Multi-Year Action Plan Updates

AES Youth Council

The AES Youth Council continues to meet monthly and remains actively engaged in planning for the year ahead. The Council is currently developing both the 2026 Youth Spring Gathering and the 2026 Youth Fall Gathering, which will provide opportunities for cultural learning, leadership development, and connection among youth. Planning has also begun for Youth Council contributions to the Niigaan Gdizhaami Forum.

More details on each initiative will be shared in the new year as planning progresses. Additionally, the 2026 AES Calendars have been finalized and will be distributed this month to Participating First Nations and partner organizations. Thank you to everyone who continues to support Youth Initiatives as we work toward another successful year.

For more information on the 2026 AES Calendar, contact KEB Youth Initiatives Coordinator, Kaelyn Pizzale: Kaelyn.Pizzale@a-e-s.ca



Multi-Year Action Plan Updates

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY


**ANISHINABEK
EDUCATION SYSTEM**

TRAUMA-INFORMED TEACHING THROUGH AN INDIGENOUS LENS:

HONOURING RELATIONSHIP, STORY, AND
SPIRIT IN LEARNING SPACES

 **January 7th, 2026**

 **3:30 PM - 4:30 PM**

 **VIRTUAL**

THIS SESSION GUIDES EDUCATORS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO UNDERSTAND TRAUMA-INFORMED TEACHING THROUGH AN INDIGENOUS LENS. CENTERED ON HOLISTIC, RELATIONAL, AND LAND-BASED WELLNESS. PARTICIPANTS WILL REFLECT ON TEACHING AS AN ACT OF RELATIONSHIP, RECIPROCITY, AND CARE.

PARTICIPANTS WILL:

- RECOGNIZE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TRAUMA, CULTURE, AND RELATIONSHIP.
- EXPLORE INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO HEALING AND WELLNESS.
- LEARN STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE SAFETY, BELONGING, AND CONNECTION.
- REFLECT ON HOW SELF-AWARENESS SHAPES CLASSROOM ENERGY.
- SEE TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE AS A STEP TOWARD HEALING AND RECONCILIATION.



Register using the QR code or the link above!



**JEN ASHLEE - AN INDIGENOUS
BEHAVIOUR AND EDUCATIONAL
CONSULTANT**

**THIS VIRTUAL
SESSION IS
FREE AND
OPEN TO ALL!**

Virtual Secondary School

The Virtual Secondary School is currently in Semester 1 of the 2025–2026 school year, offering the following courses: LNOAO – Level A Ojibwe, LNOBO – Level B Ojibwe, and MTH1W – Grade 9 De-streamed Math.

Registration is now open for Semester 2, with available courses including LNOAO and LNOBO Ojibwe.

For the first time, the Virtual Secondary School will also be introducing LNOCO – Level C Ojibwe and LNDAO – Level A Lunaapeew.

Students across Ontario are eligible to register. To enroll, they can visit the Guidance Department at their home school or connect directly with Marlo Beaucage, Systems Principal, at marlo.beaucage@a-e-s.ca.



**ANISHINABEK
EDUCATION SYSTEM**

**To register for online courses, visit:
<https://forms.office.com/r/EXZ8BQ7SXJ>**



**Or through the e-Learning portal at provincial school
Guidance departments.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

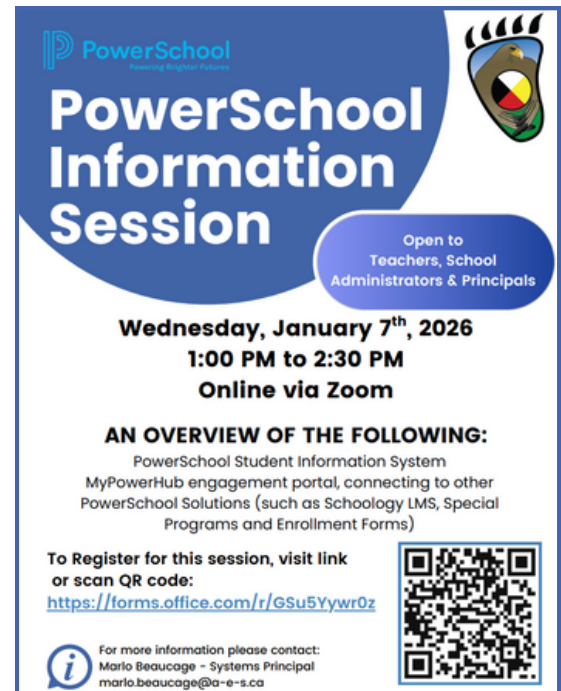
PowerSchool Information Session

January 7, 2026

Online Event

Contact:

Marlo.Beaucage@a-e-s.ca



PowerSchool
PowerSchool
Information
Session

Open to
Teachers, School
Administrators & Principals

Wednesday, January 7th, 2026
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM
Online via Zoom

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING:
PowerSchool Student Information System
MyPowerHub engagement portal, connecting to other
PowerSchool Solutions (such as Schoology LMS, Special
Programs and Enrollment Forms)

To Register for this session, visit link
or scan QR code:
<https://forms.office.com/r/GSu5Yywr0z>

For more information please contact:
Marlo Beaucage - Systems Principal
marlo.beaucage@a-e-s.ca



**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!**

The Kinooaadziwin Education Body invites you to learn how the Human Rights Legal Support Centre Indigenous Services can support those who have experienced discrimination.

About the Human Rights Legal Support Centre:
The Human Rights Legal Support Centre advances equality and protects human rights by providing a range of accessible legal and support services to those who have faced discrimination contrary to Ontario's human rights laws. The HRLSC has an Indigenous Service model where the organization commits to staffing Indigenous professionals, at all levels of service, for the purposes of providing legal services to Indigenous litigants who are facing human rights issues.

This one-hour virtual session will introduce:

- Human rights legislation and the Ontario Human Rights Code
- The HRLSC Indigenous Services and how to access services
- What the human rights system can do for Indigenous complainants as a colonial tool

JANUARY 21, 2026
4:00PM - 5:00PM

To register, scan the QR Code or follow the link below:
<https://forms.office.com/r/J44LNeEBQN>

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Nicole Sylvester is an Anishinaabe woman from the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. Nicole received her law degree from University of Toronto in 2015 where she was president of the Indigenous Law Students Association. She completed a legal fellowship with the HRLSC in the summer of 2013, went on to practice labour law litigation and then returned to the HRLSC in 2024 as Legal Counsel and is currently serving as Indigenous Services and Outreach Coordinator.

Human Rights Information Session

January 21, 2026

Online Event

Contact:

Roslyn.Bowness@a-e-s.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS



**KINOOMAADZIWIN
EDUCATION BODY**

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, 30th January, 2026

Region 3 Anishinaabemowin PLC
(Professional Learning Circle for
Ojibwe teachers & their support staff)

In-person and online

ACCOMMODATIONS:
HAMPTON INN BY HILTON NORTH BAY
950 MCKEOWN AVE NORTH BAY ON

EVENT LOCATION:
DUCHESNAY COMMUNITY HALL
520 COUCHIE MEMORIAL DRIVE
NORTH BAY, ONTARIO

CONTACT:
Jacinta Shawanda
jacinta.shawanda@a-e-s.ca



VELMA NOAH-NICHOLAS:
• Dr. Greymorning's
Accelerated 2nd Language
Acquisition



TO REGISTER SCAN QR CODE OR VISIT:
<https://forms.office.com/r/5ECn3A4ETf>

Region 3 Professional Learning Circle

January 30, 2026
In-Person and Online Event
Contact:
Jacinta.Shawanda@a-e-s.ca

Building Relationships Through Pedagogy

January 30, 2026
Online Event
Contact:
Paige.Fortier@a-e-s.ca

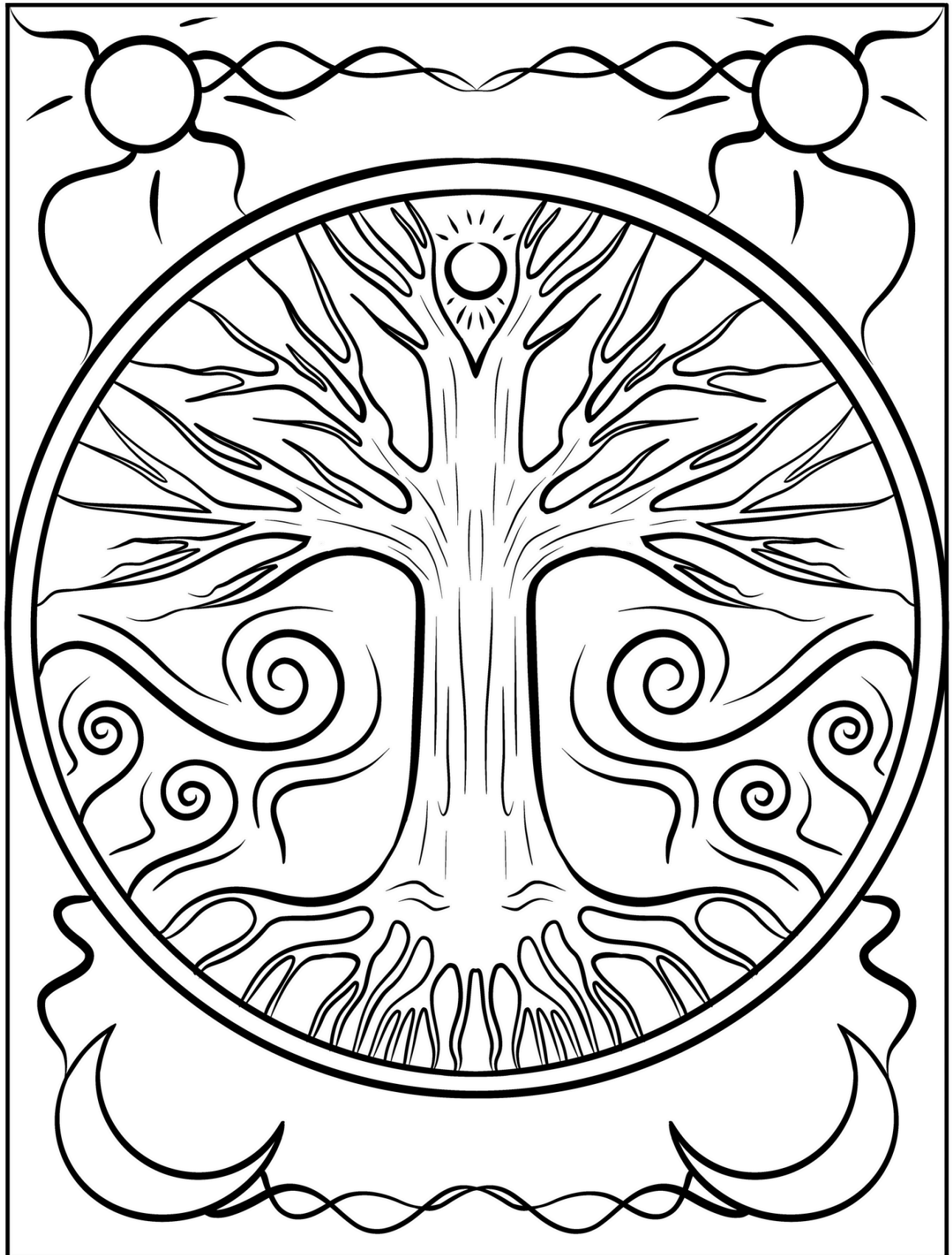


Manidoo Giizis Spirit Moon

January 2026

Niizhwaaso Giizhigad (seventh day) Sunday	Ntam Giizhigad (first day) Monday	Niizho Giizhigad (second day) Tuesday	Nso Giizhigad (third day) Wednesday	Niwo Giizhigad (fourth day) Thursday	Naano Giizhigad (fifth day) Friday	Ngodwaaso Giizhigad (sixth day) Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 PowerSchool Info Session PD Virtual Event: Trauma Informed Teaching Through an Indigenous Lens	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Human Rights Virtual Info Session	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Region 3 Professional Learning Circle Building Relationships Through Pedagogy	31

Winter Solstice Colouring Page



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