

Information Sheet:

The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation's Education, Learning and Culture Strategic Plan 2018-2021



The ELC Strategic Planning Group prepared this information sheet, which is for community members of all ages. It explains the strategic plan for our community for the years 2018 to 2021. This plan is focused on education, learning, and culture.

What does this information sheet include?

This sheet has seven sections:

1. About the strategic plan
2. About our community
3. What community members shared
4. Community resources
5. Goals
6. Next steps
7. Contact information

1. About the strategic plan

This section of the information sheet looks at why we need a plan; the goals, vision, and guiding principles for the plan; who was involved in creating the plan; and how we developed it.

Why do we need a plan?

Education, learning, and culture has a powerful impact in helping our community and our members reach their potential. Giving our young people access to quality educational opportunities is key to our future success. This is why our community leaders developed this three-year Education, Learning and Culture (ELC) Strategic Plan.

What are the goals of the plan?

The main goals of the strategic plan are to:

- sustain and strengthen culture and language through programs that our community develops; and
- coordinate programs and services to support the lifelong learning needs of Band members living in and outside the community.

What is the vision for this plan?

Together we will support each community member's lifelong learning path, including education, learning, and culture.

Guiding principles for the plan

The Seven Grandfather Teachings are the values that guide this strategic plan: *Giiyaakwaadziwin* – Honesty; *Dbaandendizwin* – Humility; *Mshkode’ewin* – Bravery; *Nbwaakaawin* – Wisdom; *Minwaadendamowin* – Respect; *Debwewin* – Truth; and *Zaagidwin* – Love.

The following principles also apply:

- The plan is a living document. We will regularly review and update it to include new ideas.
- All of our plans and activities include members living in *and* outside *Neyaashiinigmiing*.
- We are working to include our community’s plans for the Year of Language in 2019.

Who was involved in creating this plan?

The ELC Strategic Planning Group (“we”) led the development of this strategic plan. Our group also has program partners from across our community as well as Band members who completed a survey.

We developed this strategic plan with input from leaders who work for the:

- Adult Learning Centre
- Board of Education
- Language Nest
- Maadookii Seniors Centre
- Nshiime Day Care
- Youth Mental Health programs

Our team reviewed information from many sources that were vital to shaping the plan, including the:

- Community Comprehensive Plan (2014)
- Education Strategic Plan (2012-2015)

Please note: the goals and actions in this strategic plan are not an exhaustive list of those of the Education, Language and Culture (ELC) Partners individually. Each Partner continues with its own mandates and programs and come together as a group to address the goals and actions in this plan.

2. About our community

This section of the information sheet looks at our population; our approach to education, learning, and culture; and how our community is doing with language and education.

Population

The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation has nearly 2700 Band members. We have:

- 718 people living in Neyaashiinigiing
- 1924 members who live elsewhere

Our largest age groups are children and middle-aged adults.

Our approach to education, learning, and culture

Our community sees education as a high priority. All community members who responded to our survey say that education is “important” or “very important”.

Our First Nation recognizes the importance of self-determination in how we are educated and how we can re-invest in our language as a way to honour our culture. Culture and language are vital to individual and community wellness. We also need to include the positive aspects of mainstream education systems with our own culture.

How our community is doing with language and education

The 2016 Census gives us a glimpse into our knowledge of our language and educational attainment. Forty persons living in *Neyaashiinigiing* (6.5% of on-reserve community members) report having *Anishinaabemowin* as a mother tongue, and five speak the language most often at home. There are 85 community members who have *some* knowledge of *Anishinaabemowin*. 28% of respondents don't speak the language at all.

Compared to the general population of Ontario, working-age (25 to 64 years of age) community members living on reserve were *less likely* to have graduated from an educational institution or to have post-secondary qualifications. The proportion of adults who have earned a high school diploma, however, was about the same as for the province as a whole.

3. What did the community say?

This section of the information sheet looks at the results of a survey we did with community members in 2017.

Lifelong learning goals

We asked community members about their lifelong learning goals and perceptions of the ELC programming.

Community members rate the ELC programs as meeting academic goals in a satisfactory way. They see them as somewhat lacking in meeting culture and language goals, especially the high schools.

We know that 86% of community members have lifelong learning goals. 59% of people expressed goals that relate to language and culture, such as improving or learning *Anishinaabemowin*, improving cultural knowledge, and learning or improving skills. Other goals related to education (finishing high school, finishing college or university degrees, etc.), continuing education (training, courses etc.), or to career goals.

- **96%** of respondents want to learn more *Anishinaabemowin*
- **All parents** say it is somewhat or very important for their children to learn *Anishinaabemowin*

How to improve education, learning, and culture in the community

Band members provided the following suggestions through the survey for improving education, learning, and culture. They said we should:

- Promote *Anishinaabemowin*
- Improve communications about programming
- Make programs accessible for everyone
- Get the community more involved
- Improve program coordination and resourcing

4. Community resources

Our community has numerous programs and services in education, learning, and culture. They are as follows:

- Adult Learning Centre
- The Board of Education
- Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions Counsellors
- Kikendaasogamig Elementary School
- Language Nest
- Nshiime Day Care
- [Maadookii Seniors Centre](#)

5. Goals

This section outlines the goals for this plan, which were agreed upon by our planning group and our participants. This is where you will be involved in helping to move the goal forward. We provide notes where we will be seeking community input/consultation.

Goal 1: Increase coordination among programs and services in the lifelong learning continuum

This will happen through a variety of strategies, including a new ELC coordinator position to assist with Partner meeting planning and implementing the strategic plan, development of newsletters and mail outs informing you of opportunities, and a new logo/brand in English and *Anishinaabemowin*.

Goal 2: Sustain and strengthen culture and language through community-developed curriculum and immersion programs

We will work to develop a language and culture strategy that is multi-faceted and community-wide. Education partners meet with cultural experts and language speakers. This involves the entire community, including Chief and Council, programs, members, Elders, and language speakers.

Goal 3: Acquire appropriate services for students with special needs (physical, educational, emotional, gifted)

The work we do in this area will happen with our service providers, including identifying needs of current students/clients and what services we need to meet their needs; identify services available through our programs as well as barriers/gaps in services; and creating a special needs team to write proposals and develop initiatives to support students with special needs.

Goal 4: Employ Indigenous teachers, preferably community members, at the school. Provide developmental opportunities for teachers to learn the *Anishinaabe* world view.

We will include performance standards in job descriptions. We will offer opportunities for community members to get involved at the elementary school as support staff. We will include opportunities to take training/education courses. We will strategize about ways to recruit and prepare community members for a career in education, language and culture.

Goal 5: Increase the success of secondary and post-secondary students to a level equivalent to or exceeding that of the non-Aboriginal population while fostering a strong *Anishinaabe* identity.

We will continue to ensure students and parents are aware of support systems, resources and personnel available to them. We will increase opportunities for students and parents to share their challenges and solutions for student success. We will work to bridge gaps between Nawash youth and youth from surrounding communities. Currently, we are working to strengthen our voice with the School Boards in our Territory. In the long-term, we will explore the option of an *Anishinaabe* language/culture elective course that we can promote/extend to secondary and post-secondary programs.

Goal 6: Provide learning opportunities for all stages of the lifelong learning continuum

By the end of 2018, we will hold focus groups for each stage of life to determine learning needs. We will inform let the community know when these focus groups are happening. We will assess the mandates and plans of all of our partners to support each stage of lifelong learning. By the end of 2019, we will ask that all our partners' annual plans identify programs that meet the lifelong learning needs of each age group. We will consult with the community on this goal.

6. Coordination and Communications about the ELC Strategic Plan

We will be hiring an ELC Coordinator who will assist us in the implementation of this strategic plan. The job posting will be provided very soon.

With this support, we will create a community engagement strategy, which will include online and hard-copy communications as well as a Community Message Board. This will also support our final **Goal 7: to increase communication to community members living outside of the community.**

We will host a community event to introduce the Community Education Plan—you should hear about this in the mail and online. We will prepare a resource and do program outreach. We will develop and update a webpage, offering feedback opportunities. We plan to consult with community members and keep you informed through progress reports and updates.

Do you have questions or suggestions about the strategic plan?

Please contact:

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