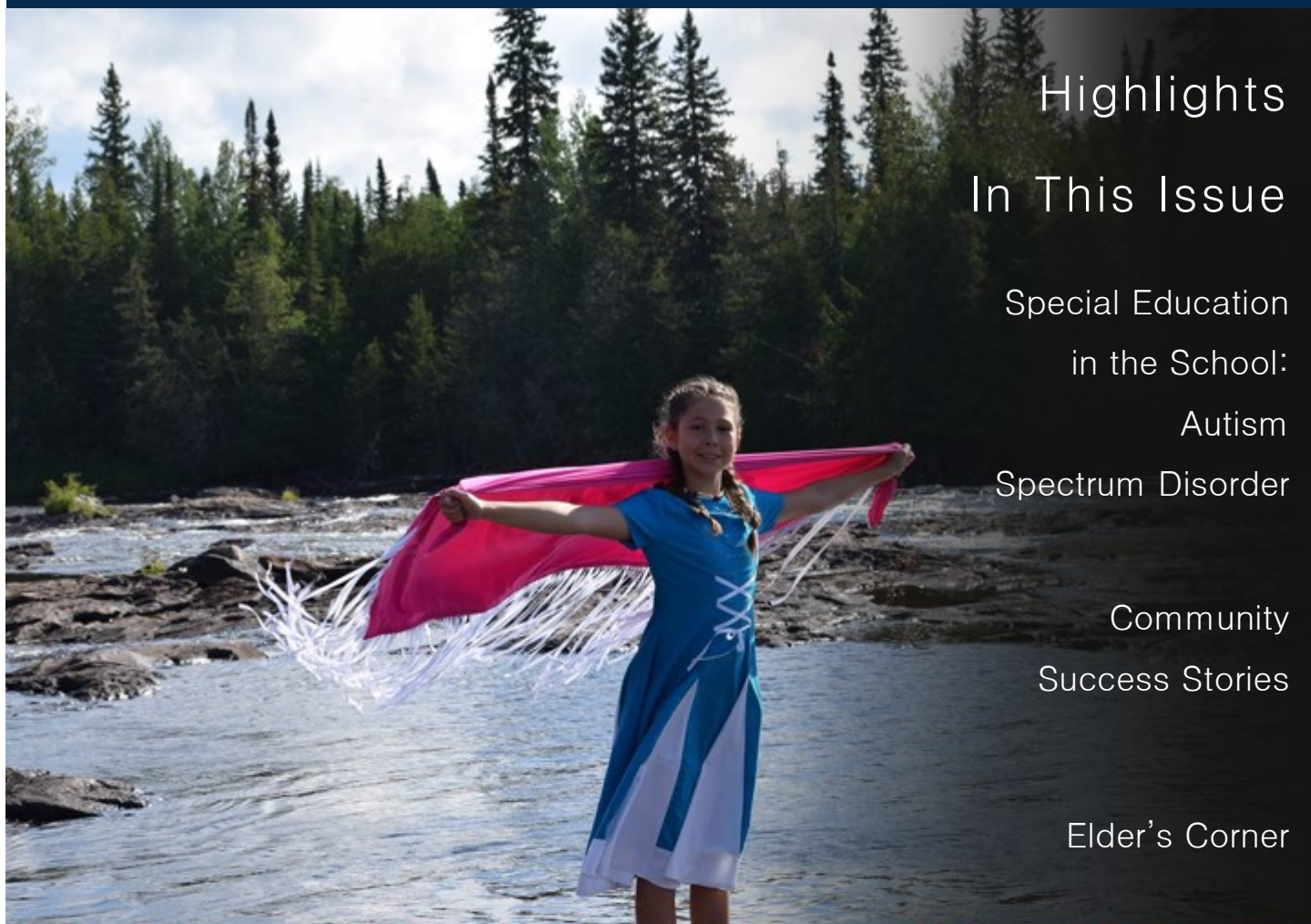


Our Gifted Children

Keechee Kahkaytahwaytahmoowiin Ahwahsheesh Binoojiinhyik



Highlights In This Issue

Special Education
in the School:
Autism
Spectrum Disorder

Community
Success Stories

Elder's Corner



Reciprocal Education Approach Update

Late 2017, a working group was established with representatives from First Nations, PTO's, TC's and Independent First Nations, Trustee and School Board associations, and the Ministry of Education to advise on issues related to Education Services Agreements (ESAs) and Reverse Education Services Agreements (RESAs). This working group has been developing policy and legislative options to enhance opportunities for First Nation learners and for funding to follow students.

In January 2018, the ESA/RESA working group supported an alternative formula-based approach to ESAs and RESAs referred to as the **Reciprocal Education Approach (REA)**. This approach is intended to improve access and reduce barriers for First Nation students who wish to attend First Nation schools or provincially funded schools, and for students transitioning between school systems.

On March 28, 2018, amendments to the Ontario Education Act, [in the form of Schedule 9 to Bill 31, Plan for Care and Opportunity Act (Budget Measures), 2018,] were introduced in the Legislative Assembly. They received Royal Assent on May 8, 2018, that is, they have been passed by the Legislative Assembly. These amendments to the Act create the legislative framework for the Reciprocal Education Approach (REA). Though the legislative amendments have received Royal Assent, they are not yet in force.

Under the proposed amendments to the Education Act, a board would be required to provide for the admission of a pupil of the board (and other prescribed pupils) to a (prescribed) First Nation's school. The amendments would mean that pupils of the board that are attending First Nation operated schools would attract the same amount of funding as First Nation students attending a District School Board .

The REA formula would include special education (Special Incidence Portion and Special Equipment Amounts) amounts and costing which would ensure that equipment and services follow students if they transfer from a school to another.

The legislative amendments are not yet in force and regulations are in the process of development, and will need to be approved by Cabinet before they become law. If passed the legislative amendments are set to come into force by September 1, 2019 . The Chiefs of Ontario will provide communities with updates regarding the Reciprocal Education Approach when there is any new developments.

Patrik Lowen
Senior Special Education Technician
Chiefs of Ontario

Your feedback is important to us!

Our Special Education Sharing Forums have been well received and there have been consistent requests for these to continue. To date we have covered Policy and Administration, Behaviour and Exceptionalities, and Trauma, Mental Health, Drug related issues, Numeracy Strategies, Literacy Strategies, and Transition to Post-Secondary.

We are currently looking for suggestions and recommendations for future Special Education Sharing Information Forums and future Webinars .

Do you have an idea you want to share? Is there a practitioner or expert you would recommend? Is there a specific topic or theme that you would like to see featured ?

Please send these recommendations to Patrik Lowen at patrik.lowen@coo.org

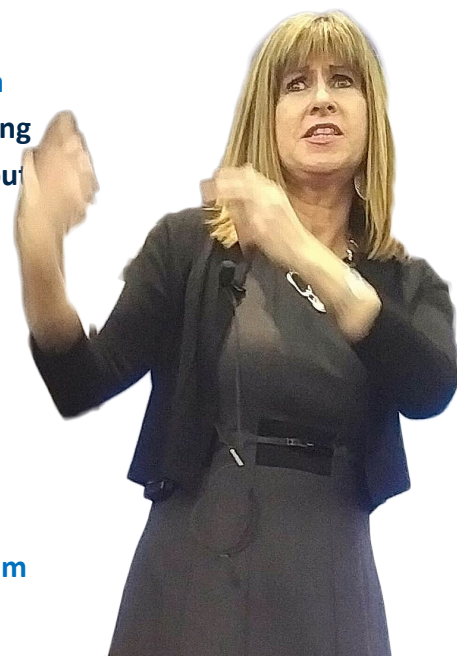
2019–2020 Special Education Sharing Forums

The education team at the Chiefs of Ontario are continuously planning future Special Education Sharing Forums. These sharing forums consist of a combination of keynote speakers, case studies, workshops, developments in research, and training sessions. The forums are meant to leave educators with newfound knowledge, skills, and tools that can be utilized when working with students. Furthermore, the forums provide excellent opportunities for communities to network with other communities.

If you have any ideas as to possible topics that you and your community would like to see featured at future Sharing Forums please email your ideas to Senior Special Education Technician Patrik Lowen at Patrik.lowen@coo.org

Some highlights from the
“Striving Forward: Supporting Student Success”
Special Education Sharing Forum held in
Toronto April 16–17, 2019

Dr. Marks Krapan
from OISE engaging
the audience about
*“Empowering
Learners to
Become Effective
Thinkers in
Mathematics”*



**Young Creek Drum
Group** (below)



The Techdudes from the Halton District School Board self contained learning disabilities classroom, incorporate technology while capitalizing upon personal strengths to discover their true abilities and find a voice within their own program.

These amazing students shared with the audience practical ways they incorporate into their daily routine allowing them to find their voice .



Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD is a neurological disorder, meaning that the chemistry and structure of the brain of individuals that are diagnosed with ASD can differ compared to a regular brain. Current research suggests that ASD normally appear around the age of two to three and is more common in males than females.

Common characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Students with ASD like most students have different needs and strengths. Some of the more common characteristics that students with ASD relates to communication and social interaction. Children with ASD may experience delayed speech and some may struggle to develop much speech at all and rely on gestures rather than oral language. Social interaction is also an area that some children with ASD may show little interest in or struggle to make sense of. Repetitive behaviors or a preoccupation with a theme or object may also be a characteristic of ASD. Children with ASD may also be extra sensitive to sensory stimuli such as noise, light, texture etc. which can startle them or make them upset. Finally, change and transitions can be difficult to handle for a child with ASD and can even have traumatic affect if for example a child has to change educational assistant at school.

Strengths exhibited by individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

- ◇ Non-verbal reasoning skills
- ◇ Reading skills
- ◇ Perceptual motor skills
- ◇ Drawing skills
- ◇ Computer interest and skills
- ◇ Exceptional memory
- ◇ Visual Spatial abilities

- ◇ Music skills
- ◇ A rare freshness and sense of wonderment
- ◇ Being precise and detail orientated
- ◇ Exceptional honesty and reliability
- ◇ Being dependable in regards to schedules and routines

Strategies in the classroom for educators working with children with ASD

Uniqueness

Students with ASD may be more unique from individual to individual compared to other exceptionalities that teachers experience in a classroom. Therefore, teachers should be flexible in their approach when working with children with ASD. Good record keeping and communication with the home is highly recommended to help implement support services for the student.



Teach essential skills

Teachers or educational assistance need to recognize that students with ASD may need more time to switch focus, place, and that it may take longer for them to attach meaning to words which may impact following through on instructions or requests.





Space

Students with ASD often benefit from having specified seating arrangements in the classroom that minimize unwanted stimuli or distractions from other students. Having a dedicated quiet and calm space away from the classroom is also often beneficial

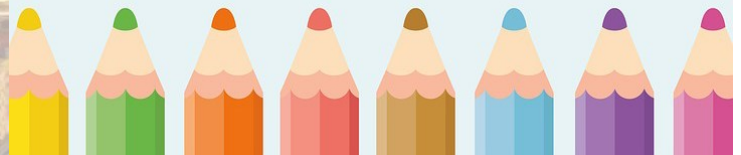


Changes in routine

A structured and predictable routine is recommended as students with ASD may not deal with change very well. In instances when the teacher or EA is away, provide the substitute teacher with detailed instructions and communicate with the child's parents/guardians that you will be away. Providing the student with a customized visual schedule is also a good idea.

Good Morning!

- Hang up Backpack
- Get Lunchbox out
- Enter Quietly
- Sign In
- Turn in Homework



Interaction and physical activity

It is important for students with ASD to be given the opportunity to build relationships and to have meaningful interactions with their peers. Physical activity and movement is also important to consider when working with students with ASD.

**Physical
activity**



Sources: Bennett, S., Weber, K. J., & Dworet, D. (2013). *Special education in Ontario schools*. Toronto: Highland Press & Special Education in Ontario, Autism Ontario, & Autism Canada.

Building capacity through community collaboration – Autism Spectrum Disorder

In collaboration with Autism Ontario the Chiefs of Ontario organized a wonderful day of professional learning aimed at better support students that have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Students with ASD may experience certain difficulties in verbal communication, behavior, or social interactions. It is reported that 1 in 94 children is diagnosed with ASD in Canada however that data does not necessarily accurately capture First Nations children. As a result, initiatives such as the partnership between Autism Resource Centre and the Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan are exploring the rate and impact of autism in Indigenous communities further.

In April, First Nations communities from the Manitoulin Island area including 66 educators and parents actively



engaged in learning more about ASD and how to better support those students. Jamie Read from Autism Ontario delivered a presentation that focused on the basics of ASD aimed at giving participants a good fundamental understanding of ASD. Kayla Raaflaub focused on the particulars of understanding and working with challenging behaviors in the classroom using Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA). The overall goal of ABA is to identify and increase behaviors that are helpful to the child and decrease behaviors that may be harmful or negatively affect a child's learning.

The Chiefs of Ontario would like to thank Autism Ontario
and all the participants that attended the event.

Elder's Corner

Maggie Magiskan - Aroland First Nation



What is the importance of education?

In this day and age it is very important to stay in school and to enjoy it. I find the more you like something the more commitment you put into it. If you don't have an education you cannot get a decent job. I raised all my kids to stay in school and become a professional, then you become a contributor to life and society and you will own your own destiny. You will have more opportunities if you have any education. It's not like when I was growing up, we had skills to allow us to get jobs. You seem to get more out of life if you are educated.

How important is the connection to success in education and your culture, traditions and language?

I am fluent in my Ojibway language, culture and traditions, having all of these you are grounded with both feet planted to mother earth. I was brought up with a foundation, I know who I am and where I come from, I am proud of who I am. To add a modern day education to this is important for balance.

How can we support and promote Special Education and its' success in our First Nation territories?

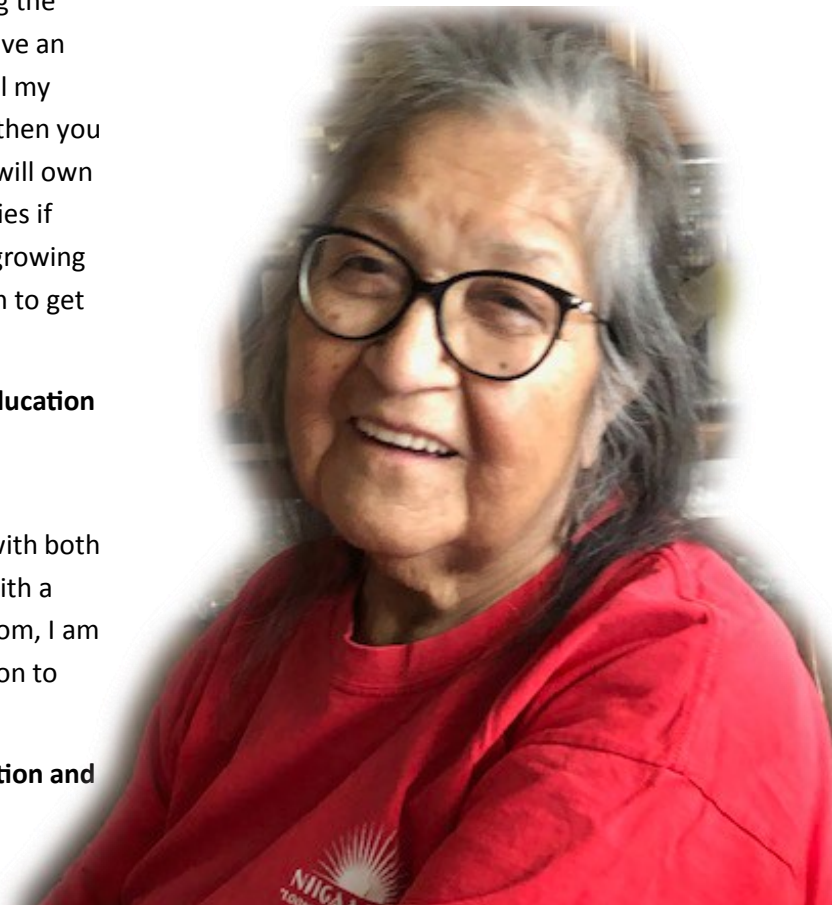
As a community we must embrace our students who need extra supports for success. Our teaching staff, principals, students, parents and family members, our leadership need to understand Special Education. We need to come together with each other to learn about the Special Education and to better understand the needs of our students.

What would you say to a student who is struggling with a class, fellow student or personal conflict?

I would encourage the student to report to a teacher or an adult. Try to work together on the issue or problem. Nothing is too big to resolve if you have a lot of support and work as a team.

Final thoughts- What advice would you give someone that wants to achieve their educational goals?

Good old hard work and get to school every day, like I said, start liking school, all students have a favorite subject. Push yourself if there is something wrong, everyone should come together as a team to fix it. We as Nishnawbe people we have to remember our teachings, if we remember these and balance the teachings and the support of our families we can achieve anything.



Community Stories – Supporting Struggling Readers Through Tiered Intervention

Quinte Mohawk School, located on the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, is a K-8 school with just over three hundred students.

Concerned about low reading scores in the primary division, the QMS school team initiated a face lift of their literacy program. The facelift included the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework and re-introducing the key elements of an effective literacy program.

Three Keys Steps of RTI

Early Intervention

The RTI framework was developed on the premise that early intervention is essential for struggling readers. Keith Stanovich's Matthew effect advances the idea that students who acquire literacy skills early will continue to make gains while students who struggle will continue to struggle. RTI's use of universal screening tools and ongoing progress monitoring ensures that struggling students are identified as early as kindergarten.

Three-Tiered Approach

The second key to the RTI framework is the multitiered approach to instruction. Tier I is the entrance to RTI where core instruction occurs to the whole group. For 80% of the students this tier provides sufficient instruction for students to acquire age appropriate literacy skills. Students who fail to progress, or progress too slowly, transition to the second tier. Tier II provides small group intervention to approximately 5 – 10% of the student population in addition to whole group Tier I instruction. Tier III is the final tier, providing instruction for between 1 - 5% of the student population in highly intensive instruction in a small group, or one-on-one setting. Students in Tier III continue to receive instruction



in Tier II and I. Students who fail to progress or progress too slowly at the tier III level are referred to the special education department for additional assessment.

Explicit and Systematic Evidence Based Instruction

RTI requires explicit and systematic instruction throughout the tiers. In 1997, the National Reading Panel (NRP) outlined the now famous five pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The NRP repeated a necessity throughout its report: all instruction must be evidence-based and delivered with an explicit and systematic approach.

Implementation of Evidence Based Instruction

The special education team at QMS began the implementation of the RTI in September of the current school year. Laura Schwager, the LLI teacher, met with each primary teacher to assist with grouping students based on their reading levels and next steps. She then assisted with the implementation of the LLI framework by first allowing the classroom teacher to observe her teaching and then by supporting the classroom teacher as they began to implement. ISRT Jennifer Maracle met with teachers during weekly PLC meetings, liaised with administration, organized professional development and planned next steps for implementation.



Tire III in action

Implementation of RTI

Together, Schwager and Maracle developed a data board that tracks student progress on the universal screening tools and progress monitoring assessments. The data board ensures early identification of struggling readers and allows the team to plan movement between tiers for each student.

Success and Next Steps

At the end of year one, the special education team is optimistic about the reading results from the primary division. QMS administrators appreciate the transparency of the RTI framework and the ease it provides in planning for the 2019-2020 school year. Classroom teachers like the explicit and systematic instruction style of the LLI framework.

The next phase of RTI installation includes developing an electronic version of the data board, professional development for the implementation of LLI framework into the junior and intermediate classrooms. Ongoing training in assessments will ensure that all teachers are both administering the assessment correctly and learning how to plan for next steps for each student

Submitted by: Jen Maracle Teacher/Special Education Coordinator QMS



Ontario First Nation Special Education Working Group

In 2005, the Ontario First Nations Special Education Working group (OFNSEWG) was formed as a subcommittee to the First Nations Education Coordination Unit (FNECU). It is a joint technical and advisory body mandated by the FNECU to provide recommendations on issues and specific strategies for political review and/or approval for action. The OFNSEWG is made up of representatives from the First Nations Education Coordination Unit and Indigenous Services Canada.

Ontario First Nation Special Education Working Group	
Name	Organization
Murray Maracle	Chiefs of Ontario
Cherity Calder	Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Murray Waboose	Union of Ontario Indians
Vacant	Association of Iroquois Allied Indians
Yolanda Fobister	Grand Council Treaty #3
Debbie Terrance	Independent First Nations
Shelley Knott-Fife	Indigenous Services Canada

The Special Education Technicians

What is a Special Education Support Technician (SEST)?

There are currently two SESTs providing support to the First Nations in Ontario. The Chiefs of Ontario has posted a position for the third technician to join the team, in the interim Patrik Lowen is happy to assist the Northwestern/Kenora area. The role of the SEST/s are to support and assist First Nations with:

- ◇ effective use of HCSEP funding;
- ◇ understanding and addressing capacity issues around special education;
- ◇ collection and analysis of information related to improving the First Nations special education programs;
- ◇ liaise and strengthen relationships with First Nations, Tribal Councils, Chiefs of Ontario, school boards and other organizations;
- ◇ identifying and addressing barriers and challenges in the delivery of special education services;
- ◇ support with policy development, tuition service agreements;
- ◇ organize Special Education Sharing Forums across Ontario.

Special Education Support Technician Community Listing

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North Eastern Region
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Aroland First Nation	Fort Albany First Nation	Mattagami First Nation	Sachigo First Nation	Whitesand First Nation
Attawapiskat First Nation	Fort Severn First Nation	Marten Falls First Nation	Sandy Lake First Nation	Keewaytinook Okimakanak Tribal Council
Bearskin Lake First Nation	Fort William First Nation	Moose Cree First Nation	Shibogama First Nations Council	Independent First Nations Alliance-IFNA
Cat Lake First Nation	Ginoogaming - Long Lac #77	Muskrat Dam First Nation	Taykwa Tagamou Nation (New Post)	Northern Nishnawbe Ed Council (NNEC)
Constance Lake First Nation	Kasabonika First Nation	Neskantaga - Lansdowne House	Wawakapewin First Nation	
Eabametoong First Nation	Kashechewan First Nation	North Caribou Lake	Webequie First Nation	
	Kiashke Zaaging	Ojibways of Saugeen #258	Weenusk First Nation	
	Anishinaabek - Gull Bay	Pays Plat First Nation	Wahgoshig - Abitibi #70	
	Kingfisher Lake First Nation	Red Rock First Nation		

TBD (Patrik Lowen, Interim)	Grassy Narrows First Nation	Naicatchewenin First Nation	Northwest Angle #37 - Animakee Wa Zhing	Seine River First Nation
North Western Region	Iskatewizaagegan #39	Naotkamegwaning - Whitefish Bay	Obashkaandagang - Washagamis Bay	Shoal Lake #40
Anishnaabe of Naogashing - Big Island	Lac La Croix First Nation	Nibinamik First Nation	Ochiichagwe'babigo'ining - Dalles	Slate Falls First Nation
Big Grassy First Nation	Kitchenuhmaykoosib - Big Trout Lake	Nicickousemenecaning	Ojibways of Onigaming - Sabaskong	Wabaseemoong First Nation
Couchiching First Nation	Keewaywin First Nation	Nigigoonsiminikaaning		
Deer Lake First Nation	Mishkeegogamang	North Spirit Lake First Nation	Pikangikum First Nation	
Eagle Lake First Nation	Mitaanjigaming First Nation	Northwest Angle #33 First Nation	Poplar Hill First Nation	
			Rainy River First Nation	

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Alderville First Nation	Stony Point	Mississauga #8	Temagami First Nation	Oneida Nation of the Thames
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation	Chippewas of Nawash - Cape Croker	Mississaugas of New Credit	Thessalon First Nation	Sagamok First Nation
Batchewana First Nation	Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation	M'Chigeeng First Nation	Wahta Mohawk Territory	Serpent River First Nation
Bkejwanong - Walpole Island	Chippewas of the Thames	Mohawks of Akwesasne	Wikwemikong Unceded	Shawanaga First Nation
Chippewas of Kettle &	Curve Lake First Nation	Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising/KTEI	
	Hiawatha First Nation	Moravian of the Thames - Delaware Nation	Brunswick House First Nation	
	Ketegaunseebee - Ojibways of Garden River	Sheguiandah First Nation	Chapleau Cree First Nation	
	Mattagami First Nation	Six Nations of the Grand River	Chapleau Ojibway	
			Matachewan First Nation	



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