



Our Gifted Children

Ziigwan, Oshkayi'ii Wayeshkad Nanda-gikendan



HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

- Elder's Corner, Peter Garrow
- Support for Remote or Hybrid Learning Environments
- Resource Consultant Services
- Training Opportunity



Message from Chiefs of Ontario Director of Education

Shé:kon
sewakwé:kon. Ayá:wenhs
sewakwé:kon sewata'karí:te
nok sewatshennón:ni



Hello everyone

I hope this greeting finds you well and happy as we embark on a new year and greet the rebirth of the sun and the return of light. Now, more than ever, we need to make an effort to increase our positive thoughts and love in and around us. Together we have been able to accomplish much despite the ever-changing threat of the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 and its variants of concern. I am very thankful for and appreciative of the strength and determination of the COO Special Education Support Technicians that work tirelessly to ensure the First Nation communities in Ontario have access to the support and resources they need to provide the best care and programming we can for our learners. I encourage each and every one of you to reach out to your designated Special Education Support Technician, whether it is to thank them for the work they do or to ask them for assistance with the important work you are doing in your community or organization. I know they will do their best to support and assist you as we embark on a journey together through 2022.

Skén:nén kénhak (let there be peace). E'tho nikawén:nake,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'JC' followed by a stylized flourish.

Julia Candlish.
Director of Education
Chiefs of Ontario

WHO WE ARE

The **Chiefs of Ontario** is a political forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action, and advocacy for the 133 First Nations communities located in Ontario.

Guided by the Chiefs in Assembly, we uphold self-determination efforts of the Anishinaabek, Mushkegowuk, Onkwehon:we, and Lenape Peoples in protecting and exercising their inherent and Treaty Rights.

Keeping in mind the wisdom of our Elders, traditional knowledge keepers, and the future for our youth, we continue to create the path forward in building our Nations as strong, healthy Peoples respectful of ourselves, each other, and all creation.



Resource Consultant Services – Your Partner in Supporting Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Day Care Support Services

Our consultants can support Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in their Day Care settings through:

- Student observation and recommendations
- Staff in-service training

Services for Students in District School Boards

The following services can be provided on-site:

- Language, reading, writing and ASL assessments
- Consultation on assessment, programming and/or equipment
- Student observation for program and/or strategy recommendations
- Support for IPRC team and/or parent meetings
- Support for IEP development
- Transition planning
- Staff In-service training
- Student workshops
- Psychological and Speech and Language Consultations are available upon request

Professional Development Opportunities

Enhanced learning experiences to support teachers and itinerants working with students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Conferences:

- Southwestern Itinerant Teachers (SWITO)
- Itinerant Teachers of Southern Ontario (ITSO)
- Symposium East-For Itinerant Teachers in Eastern Ontario
- Itinerant Teachers of Northern Ontario (ITNO)

Admissions to Provincial Schools for the Deaf

Our team will consult with the student, family, and school-based team to provide information and support the application process for students considering placement in a Provincial School for the Deaf in accordance with Ontario Regulation 296 of the Education Act.



Contact Us:

Ontario Ministry of Education Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch (PDSB)

Phone: 905-878-2851 ext. 356

TTY: 905-878-7195

Email: resource@pdsbnet.ca

Refer Online: www.pdsbnet.ca/referral-deaf



Special Education Support in Remote or Hybrid Learning Environments

The pandemic has challenged how students with special needs are supported, especially during remote or hybrid learning environments. Inequities in technology and connectivity access have been revealed and schools have done their best to be creative and resourceful in supporting students and families. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are designed around in-person support and programming. Most IEPs are developed at the beginning of the school year and reviewed and updated during the school year. The unpredictable conditions brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic has made this very challenging for educators and parents. However, it is still the school's responsibility to ensure that special needs support and programming are in place regardless if the student is learning in-person or remotely.

Here are a few key considerations for educators and parents/guardians to contemplate when assessing special education support in remote or hybrid learning environments.

Overall support considerations

- Schools need to discuss and plan how instruction and support services look in each scenario.
- Provide regular and scheduled communication between the school and parents/guardians.
- Provide parents with contact information to the child's regular support staff.
- Can second-level services be delivered remotely?
- Do families have access to technology and the internet?
- Provide families with tools and tech support.
- Mental health support, consider the social and emotional wellbeing of the student.
- Encourage families and students to do their best given the circumstances.

Considerations for the IEP

- Make contact with the parent/guardian to discuss any support and service changes.
- Share insights and learning strategies that work for the student.
- Accommodations or modifications may need to change.
- Learning expectations and annual program goals may need to change.
- Teaching and assessment strategies need to change.
- Be flexible, can physical movement and outside activities be incorporated?
- Can project-based learning be provided?
- Transition planning for movement between in-person, hybrid, and remote learning.



Elder's Corner Peter Garrow

"Critical for communication with our people, we seem to be at a crossroads with a lot of things that are happening that is going to resonate with some very positive outcomes."

"Timing is important especially for our youth they can really help in shaping the future."

Elder Peter Garrow

Education is always important to make the positive change in our lives for First Nation students, their families and their communities. Education is paramount. We need to remove the shackles of colonization. We have to start looking at the legislative pieces that have been imposed upon us. These pieces of legislation were responsible for: land removal, replacing our government systems, loss of our languages, culture and traditions. As the process of assimilation was brought upon us, it is only now that assimilation was immoral and unethical! It's also illegal! Our youth have to know what happened to our people. Why we are survivors, and not invisible or a myth. More importantly, not only do our indigenous youth need to know this, but so do non-indigenous youth because they, along with our youth are the missing link in this dilemma.

Once as a speaker to the Upper Canada District School Board Senate which comprises of appointed student representatives from the District Secondary Schools, I presented a different picture of Canada's history taught in schools. The students were shocked when I told them about residential schools, told them about 60's Scoop, the Indian Act and told them about how we needed permits to leave our own land. One non-native Senator student got up and he pointed his finger to the other Non-Indigenous Trustees and School Officials and asked, "How come we don't know this?" He went on to say, "How come we are only learning about this today?" These are non-native students/Senators. They had a thirst for knowledge and



so this whole piece of education that has been missing from our lives, and their lives, must be brought forward. It is important. All students need to be taught the real truth to make right from what is wrong.

When someone wants to meet me, and asks are you Aboriginal? Are you Indigenous? I will say, "You want to know who I am. I am Mohawk, I am Bear Clan, and I come from Akwesasne. I have a Mohawk name. Now I want to know who you are, where you are from. What are your roots? If you have a clan, what is it? Is it Irish, Scottish? Whatever it is, I want to know more about you!" (I could have answered, if I am Aboriginal, are you non-Aboriginal)? That raises a whole new level of conversation, and then we educate each other. I tell my students, "Be proud of who you are, and state it!" .

In our Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education schools our students recite in Mohawk the "Ohen:ten Kariwatehkwen" – Thanksgiving Address - every Monday morning and then a Traditional closing on Friday afternoon at the end of the School week. This Address gives thanks to the Creator for all the gifts of Creation which is so important to be of one Mind, that we begin all of our meetings, events and gatherings with this address. And, we do it in

Mohawk. This demonstrates the importance of the continuation and survival of our language, culture, and traditions.

With respect to education, years ago, one tribal chief said, “Our students require a 200 % education – 100 % of western ways and 100% of our Traditional ways”. This is a challenge that requires our education systems to meet.

When I was with the Assembly of First Nations, approximately 80 First Nation Educators, Elders, Linguists, Directors of Education were engaged by the Canadian Council on Learning to develop a First Nation Life Long Learning Model that depicts the “Sources of Knowledge” and how it can be used in our education systems. We decided on a living tree and the roots as the sources of knowledge, and the whole tree as the vehicle for establishing the education system. As a part of the lifelong learning strategy, we have to question what we have in our communities and what is missing, and then plan how to create a balance over time.

When looking at Special Education, I know that we must try to identify the needs of the children and match them with the people and resources that can provide the services required. We need to know “what happened and why? What’s the trauma or conflict in your life?” We all have trauma, and we have to face it. It may be intergenerational or something that is current, but we need to know where the trauma is coming from and what is creating the difficulty in learning and socializing. We need to dig down, find the root, develop a plan, set the base, and give the students hope. Bring in the experts and family members. Develop communication with the student, create confidence and trust, and a positive/strategic plan to move forward. They need to know that they are never alone, they are unique, with a distinct skillset, and that they are important. We all have to have special attention at times. I think we are all special needs and we can get through things together.

Timing is really important. Right now we have opened up a door with the consciousness of governments, with education systems, and with the Canadian public. This is because of residential schools, Idle No More, Every Child Matters, 60’s Scoop, Missing and Murdered Women and Girls; the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and all of the 94 recommendations that have been placed with it. All of these things are currently present because it identifies to all that something is wrong with respect to Canada and First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

Education is really the key. I want to come back to that because I just want to relate to you that when I was growing up with my grandparents, my grandmother wanted me to get an education. Do you know why? She wanted me to go to school to become an “Indian Agent”. In the village Kana:takon, St. Regis Village, we have a hill, and on top of that hill was where the Indian Agents home was for many years. Next door to the Indian Agents home was the RCMP office, next was the Health clinic, and teacherages. Only these homes in our whole community had running water and electricity. My job every morning was to get two pails of water down by the corner pump. My grandmother said, “Peter, get an education and become an Indian Agent so that you can live in that house”.

As stated earlier, right now we have movements and protests and we have to ask ourselves, why? Things have to change. The only way they will change, is through education and by also teaching the non-indigenous students along with our students what has been missing in Canada’s Education system. These protests are real; Jordon’s Principle, Shannon’s Dream, all of those things together are stating that there is unrest and it is up to us to fix it.

**“Education is not filling the pail,
it’s lighting the fire!”**

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 Service Canada.

Ontario First Nation Special Education Working Group	
Name	Organization
Julia Candlish	Chiefs of Ontario
Sherry Britton	Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Mindy Taylor	Anishinabek Nation
Kyla Stonefish	Association of Iroquois Allied Indians
Sherri Kabatay	Grand Council Treaty #3
Debbie Terrance	Independent First Nations
Shelley Knott-Fife	Indigenous Services Canada

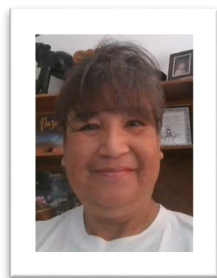
The Special Education Technicians

What is a Special Education Support Technician (SEST)?

There are three SESTs providing support to the First Nations in Ontario. They are based out of the Thunder Bay and southern Ontario. The role of the SESTs is to support and assist First Nations with:

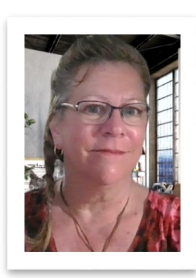
- effective use of funding designated for Special Education
- understanding and addressing capacity issues around Special Education;
- collection and analysis of information related to improving the First Nations Special Education programs;
- liaise and strengthen relationships with First Nations, Tribal 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, and education service agreements;
- professional development , organize Special Education Sharing Forums across Ontario.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT TECHNICIAN COMMUNITY LISTING



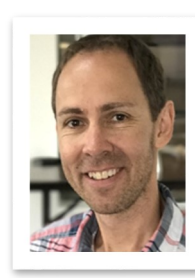
North Eastern Region
Patricia Magiskan
416-970-0521
Patricia.magiskan@coo.org

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



North Western Region
Susan Deley
807-407-6233
Susan.deley@coo.org

Animakee Wa Zhing #37
 Anishnaabe of Naongashing
 Big Grassy First Nation
 Couchiching First Nation
 Deer Lake First Nation
 Eagle Lake First Nation
 Grassy Narrows First Nation
 Iskatewizaagegan #39
 Keewaytinook Okimakanak
 Keewaywin First Nation
 Kitchenuhmaykoosib
 Lac La Croix First Nation
 Lac Seul First Nation
 Mishkeegogamang
 Mitaanjigaming First Nation
 Naicatchewenin First Nation
 Naotkamegwaning
 Nicickousemenecaning Nigigoo
 siminikaaning
 North Spirit Lake First Nation
 Northwest Angle #33 First Nation
 Obashkaandagang
 Ochiichagwe'babigo'ining
 Ojibways of Onigaming
 Pikangikum First Nation
 Poplar Hill First Nation
 Rainy River First Nation
 Seine River First Nation
 Shoal Lake #40
 Slate Falls First Nation
 Wabaseemoong First Nation
 Wabauskang First Nation
 Wabigoon Lake Ojibway
 Wapekeka First Nation
 Washagamis Bay
 Wauzhushk Onigum
 Wunnumin First Nation



South Central Region
Patrik Lowen
519-717-0161
patrik.lowen@coo.org

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

Training Opportunity!

We are pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Education has provided funding to the Geneva Centre for Autism to offer the **Ontario Educator Online Autism Training Program** for First Nations communities. This training is accessible for teachers, SERTs, and EA's working for a First Nation or First Nation organization. Courses are completed online in a self-paced format, once registered educators have 120 days to complete the course.

The objectives of this program are to increase understanding of ASD and ABA methods, enhance the delivery of programming to students with ASD, and to improve their educational, social, communication and behavioural outcomes. Formally known as Geneva Centre for Autism's Training Institute, Sonderly is the training division of Geneva Centre.

Funding is limited so at this point and time, we can not guarantee that everyone will have access to this offer, course offerings will be distributed on a first come first serve basis. A waitlist will be created depending on the demand and individuals on the waitlist will be prioritized if we receive more funding. We have advocated for additional funding and we are hopeful that we will receive more funding around March 2022.

To register please go to this link:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6683210/Ontario-Educator-Online-Autism-Training-Program-Notice-of-Interest-and-Course-Selection>

If you have any questions feel free to contact Patrik Lowen, Senior Special Education Technician at Patrik.lowen@coo.org



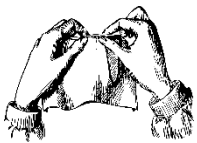
Winter Teachings

The winter season in Canada can be a cold and long which makes it an ideal time for “winter teachings”. It is during this season that craft, storytelling, song, dance, and outdoor activities are used for entertainment and to foster family connections. Language, culture, and traditions are embraced and shared with children and youth.



Activities may include:

Crafts



Story Telling



Snowshoeing



Dance



Ice Fishing



Games



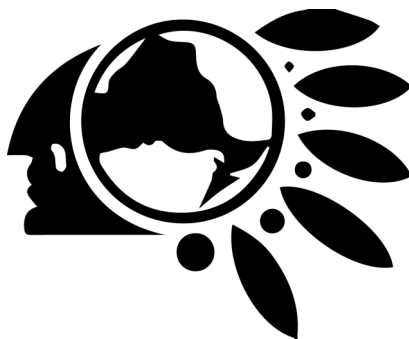
Educators can play a vital role in supporting students’ language and culture both in school and in the natural environment. Teachers and support staff who want to learn more about a particular First Nation and immerse themselves in culture are encouraged to consult with local Elders, community members, language speakers, education and Friendship Centres.

Below are some links to learning activities:

[The Learning Circle: Classroom Activities on First Nations .](#)

[INDIGENOUS ACTIVITIES YOU SHOULD TRY THIS WINTER _ MUSKRAT Magazine](#)

[FIRST NATIONS | ARTS & CULTURE | Winter Storytelling - The Green Gazette Magazine](#)



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