Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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EDUCATION JURISDICTION SUMMIT

July 23-24, 2025

Delta Hotel, Thunder Bay, ON

NISHINAWBE ASKI NATION EDUCATION JURISDICTION SUMMIT

“Nishnawbe Aski Nation is in the process of negotiating an Education Jurisdiction Agreement with the Government of Canada on behalf of the 39 First Nation communities participating. This agreement would see education moving from the Indian Act into a new structure. Including the creation of a new organization that will ultimately, negotiate, distribute education funding. Moving to a new structure is a change, and change can be a risk.”

ANISHINABEK NATION

MISSION:

The Governance Department, formerly the Restoration of Jurisdiction Department at the Anishinabek Nation is committed to rebuilding traditional governance. Our process is to facilitate the recognition of the inherent jurisdiction of the Anishinabek Nation by supporting and executing the political goals, values, and aspirations of the Anishinabek Nation are asserted.

ANISHINABEK NATION BACKGROUND - MANDATE

The Anishinabek Nation mandate was confirmed by Ceremony

Guided by the Anishinabek Declaration, 1980 – inherent right to govern ourselves.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly in 1995 identified a need for Restoring Jurisdiction and building capacity.

Education and Governance negotiations and a commitment by Canada to engage in on-going sectoral negotiations.

WHY GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Governance is about how we treat each other and about how we go in the world, meeting our obligations and responsibilities.

A strong governance foundation that is a “cultural match” can increase trust in our governing bodies and institutions and heal our Nation.

To implement Ngo Dwe Waangizid Anishinaabe and the Anishinaabe Chi-Naaknigewin, we are implementing traditional governance, which requires Ceremony, which requires Anishinaabemowin.

ANISHINAABE GOVERNANCE IS …

Nationhood. Recognizing and implementing Anishinaabe Aadziwin.

Our Ngo Dwe Waangizid Anishinaabe expresses Anishinaabe governance. One Anishinaabe Family expresses the Gifts and Laws given by the Creator.

These are our laws to live by, our responsibilities.

Ngo Dwe Waangizid Anishinaabe was given to us by our Anishinaabe Elders at the Ojibway Cultural Foundation (United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnisiing).

ANISHINABEK NATION EDUCATION AGREEMENT ACT

When we engaged our First Nations on Education, we did so by engaging with Education Directors and Coordinators (teachers, principals, school boards, etc) and leadership.

We found that it is critical to engage with community right at the outset, which allows for input and meaningful engagement.

Although the jargon can be very technical, we tried to make our conversations with community and the E'Dbendaagzijig (citizens) understandable

ON A HIGH LEVEL: ANISHINABEK NATION EDUCATION AGREEMENT ACT

You will hear more about the Anishinabek Education System, Kinoomaadizwin Education Body in this conference.

The *Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement*, ratified in 2017, is a self-government agreement between the Government of Canada and 23 Anishinabek First Nations that recognizes First Nation control over Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education on and off-reserve.

The *Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement* with Canada provides reliable funding to operate the stand-alone Anishinabek Education System, a system parallel to its provincial counterparts, where Participating First Nations have full control over how to best allocate education funding.

In moving forward with the *Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement* with Canada, the 23 Participating First Nations chose to be a party to the complementary *Master Education Agreement* with Ontario. The provincial agreement creates a new relationship between the Anishinabek First Nations and Ontario that supports Anishinabek student success and well-being in the Anishinabek Education System and the provincially-funded education system.

WHAT DOES GOVERNANCE MEAN?

“Governance” is about **how** a First Nation, or any governing body or administration, whether a nation-state like Canada or a social club, organizes itself and makes decisions.

Governance is about creating our structures and decision-making processes.

Anishinaabe governance is based on the Dodemaag or Clan Structure and reaching consensus through the Seven-Pointed Star decision-making process.

Indian Act governance is the opposite of Anishinaabe governance. It was imposed, pits families against families, First Nation against First Nation. Based on notions of majority rules, political power and money – who gets what.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE ANISHINABEK NATION?

COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS:

Collaborative relationships within the Anishinabek Nation among the self-governing entities: Education, Governance, Child Well Being, Health Transformation, Justice, etc.

Information sharing and coordination

Preservation of traditional and customary decision-making practices

FUTURE PLANS:

Expand strategies to include additional First Nations in the agreements

Implement strategic planning and action steps

Nationhood and First Nation capacity building to implement jurisdiction

MIIGWECH

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