

2016 Annual Report

Moving Education Forward

KOBE



www.koeducation.ca



www.kochiefs.ca

Keewaytinook Okimakanak, which means Northern Chiefs in Oji-Cree, is a non-political Chiefs Council serving Deer Lake, Fort Severn, Keewaywin, McDowell Lake, North Spirit Lake and Poplar Hill First Nations. The organization is directed by the Chiefs of the member First Nations who form the Board of Directors. Through its close awareness of community needs and its team approach, the Council advises and assists its member First Nations. The Council provides services in the areas of health, education, economic development, employment assistance, legal, public works, finance and administration, and computer communications.



Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education - KOBE

Box 340, 10 Mine Road
Balmertown, ON P0V 1C0
Phone: (807) 735-1381
Fax: (807) 735-3392
Toll Free: 1-800-387-3740
www.koeducation.ca



Keewaytinook Internet High School – KiHS

Box 340, 10 Mine Road
Balmertown, ON P0V 1C0
Phone: (807) 735-1381
Fax: (807) 735-3392
Toll Free: 1-800-387-3740
<http://kihs.knet.ca>

1046 Memorial Avenue
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 4A3
Phone: (807) 735-1381
Fax: (807) 768-4817



Keewaytinook Okimakanak Secondary Student Services - KOSSS

1046 Memorial Avenue
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 4A3
Phone: (807) 346-4204
Fax: (807) 346-4330
Toll Free: 1-888-893-4111
www.kosss.knet.ca

Box 1439 King Street
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B9
Phone: (807) 737-1135
Fax: (807) 737-1720



K-Net

Box 1439 King Street
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B9
Phone: (807) 737-1135
Fax: (807) 737-1720
Toll Free: 1-877-737-5638
www.knet.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report from the Director of Education	2
Board Members	4
Board Structure	5
Report from the Assistant to the Director of Education	6
KO Education Programs	
Our Communities	7
First Nations Student Success Program	8
Attendance Reports	8
Community Visits	8
Literacy	9
Numeracy	10
Student Retention	11
Assessment	13
Technology	15
New Paths for Education	16
First Nation and Inuit Employment Strategies	16
Report from KiHS	17
Report from KOSSS	18
Report from K-Net	20
Message from Elder Abe Kakepetum “Reconnect”	21

ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBE) is nearing the end of the second full fiscal year of operation since its creation by the Chiefs' resolution (05/12/14 #1) in December 2014. Much has been accomplished over the past two years and especially this past year. I am very honoured to be part of a forward-thinking organization in these very exciting times of growth and change in First Nations education.

We put much effort this year in to establishing a Strategic Plan which will govern our priorities over five years in some main areas established through community consultations and discussions. This also involved creating a yearly Board Improvement Plan to ensure we are on track with our areas of focus for each year.

I am proud to share with you the accomplishments of our board in this report. Please see below for some specific areas we have been focusing on this year.

First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP)

FNSSP continues to be the pillar of our programming and support to the partner communities. Students are being supported in terms of numeracy, literacy and retention as staff coordinates new programming and resource-based activities with the community schools.

For the current year, we are receiving an increase in funding for FNSSP that may result in an additional full-time staff member in each community school to support oral language and reading acquisition in the early years. Further details of the FNSSP projects are described in the pages of this report.

MCYS Programs: Student Nutrition and Mental Wellness

We will continue to receive nutrition funding from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) for each community in the next fiscal year. This supports a breakfast and snack program as well as staff to run this in each school.

Additionally, each community will also receive approximately \$15,000 from MCYS through Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) for mental health activities for the remainder of the fiscal year. We have been advocating for this funding for a long time and we hope the continued funding next year will be sufficient to support the beginnings of a mental health program in our schools.

Advisory Services

We have been working with the local education directors and principals when needs and questions arise to find a solution or answer. This includes working through and discussing issues that arise in terms of our association with other First Nation education organizations in the district, territory and province as well as the Ministry of Education and the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Secondary Programming

The board has been working with Keewatinook Internet High School (KiHS) and Keewatinook Okimakanak Secondary Student Services (KOSSS) to ensure the secondary students receive the best choice for their education programs. This means support in transition from one to the other and negotiations with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to ensure funding is not interrupted unnecessarily. KiHS and KOSSS will continue to discuss with Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC) schools to get academic level courses in their programming for Keewatinook Okimakanak students.

The Dryden Pilot Project started this year and we currently have five students at the house in Dryden supported by two house parents. We hope to be able to support eight students in this pilot for the next school year.



Structural Readiness

We are continuing our work with Structural Readiness this year and are building the capacity and expertise within the board. We have 14 staff at the board office and are hoping to expand this in the next fiscal year to support additional programming and processes. We are hoping to hire a KOBE finance/HR manager to manage the financial needs associated with our growing programming.

We have been holding community engagement activities in the communities for information gathering. We want to get direction from our partner communities as to how we strategically move forward as a board.

We are in the process of getting incorporated as a non-profit charity. This will provide a more specific focus for our Board of Directors as well as help us access additional funding from other sources.

Through the work we have done as a developing board and through negotiations with INAC, we have accessed more funding for board growth activities. We are hoping our 2017/2019 Structural Readiness proposal will continue with this funding trend so we can move the development even further along.

Partnership with Keewatin-Patricia District School Board (KPDSB)

In October 2016, we established a partnership with KPDSB that has allowed us to offer our community school staff with access to resources which will help them professionally and in turn help

communities with staff retention. Some aspects of the partnership include shared professional development and training opportunities, mentorship for principals, teachers and board members, and secondment of specialized staff. Our partnership also allows for us to access programs and resources not available to First Nations schools such as the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) and services for Special Education and Speech-Language services.

Education Partnerships Program

Through our partnership with NAN, we have accessed funding to ensure our provincial students are supported in all ways they should be while in the provincial systems with appropriate programming and resources. We have hired a liaison staff member who will work with us in ensuring our relationship with our provincial partner schools is maximized to benefit our students. This program has also provided additional opportunity for shared Professional development through job shadowing and reciprocal visits among our KOBE and partner schools' staff.

Moving Forward

The board will continue to work under the mandate that the Chiefs have given us to coordinate education activities with Keewatinook Okimakanak. We are developing a budget that depends greatly on proposals we are presenting to INAC as well as decisions made at KOBE and through our Chiefs' mandate. Our future development and expansion of services depends solely on successful negotiations with INAC for funding in our proposals. KOBE will continue to look at moving the priorities of the communities forward to maximize support and funding while providing the best education specific to our students.

We will work to better develop KOBE's support to the communities at different levels of supervisory services in terms of school evaluations, performance appraisals and any other areas requested. Our board will continue to work in partnership with our communities as well as with other First Nations' organizations to share our journey. We are constantly being asked by our partners in education in our region to share our journey and process thus far. We welcome your advice, support and input as we move ahead to support student achievement in our communities and shape the KOBE Strategic Plan moving forward.

These are just a few of the exciting highlights of our year. Please read the full report for further details of our projects and activities in language and culture, numeracy, literacy, Special Education, student retention, and technology.

Meegwitch,

Darrin Potter
Director of Education

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK BOARD OF EDUCATION

BOARD MEMBERS

Moses Kakekaspan

Education Director, Fort Severn

Corey Rae

Band Councillor with Education Portfolio, North Spirit Lake

Lenard Mawakeesick

Band Councillor with Education Portfolio, Deer Lake

Howard Comber

Deputy Chief with Education Portfolio, Poplar Hill

David Thompson

Education Director, Keewaywin

Lois James

Band Councillor with Education Portfolio, McDowell Lake

Abe Kakepetum

Elder, Keewaywin

Alternates:

Fort Severn – Dennis Bluecoat, Band Councillor with Education Portfolio

North Spirit Lake – Adrian Lawrence, Education Program Coordinator

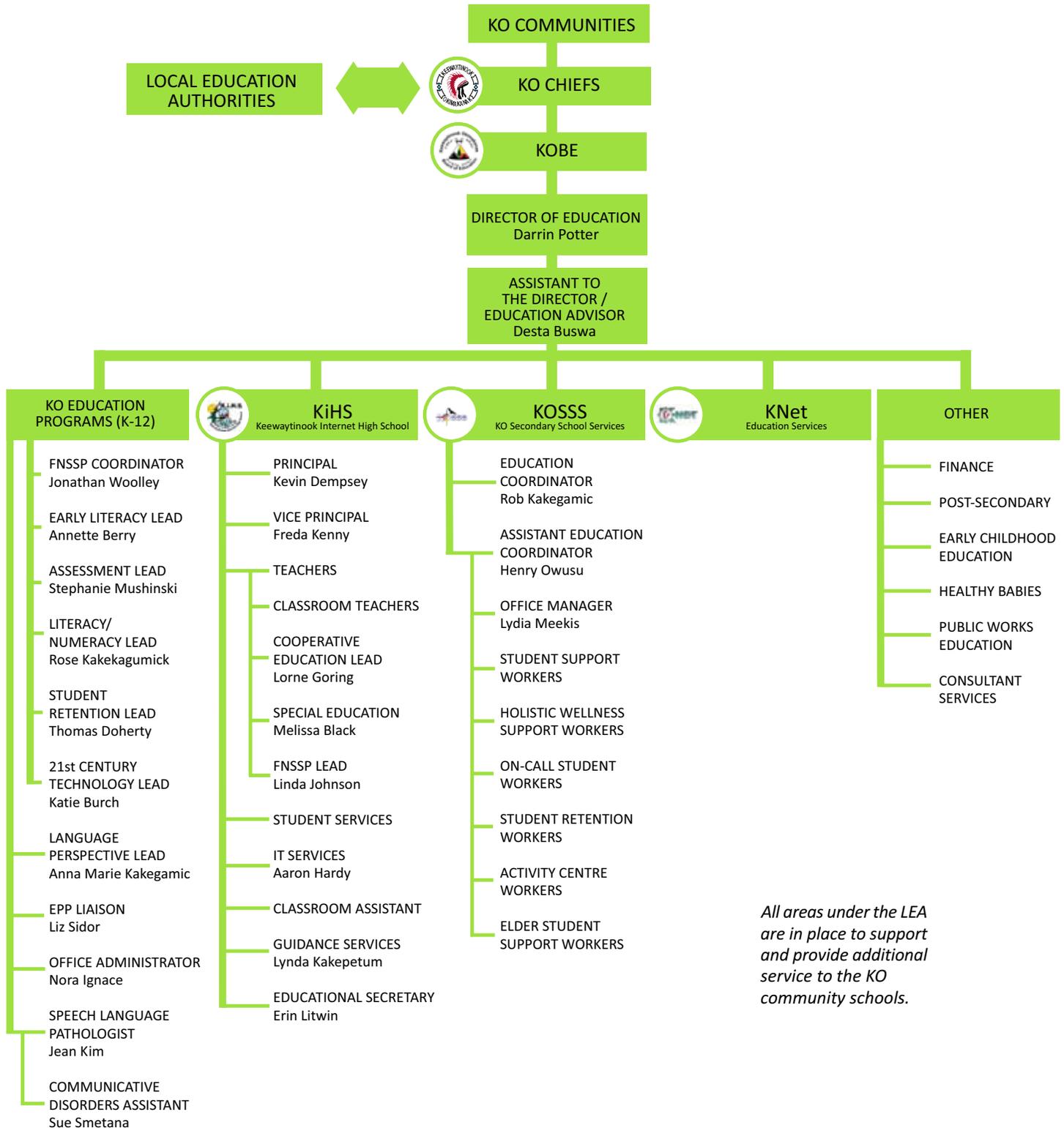
Deer Lake – Oscar Meekis, Education Director (on leave)

Poplar Hill – Donald Moose, Education Director

Sheryl Lawson - Band Councillor with Health Portfolio, McDowell Lake



KOBE BOARD STRUCTURE



REPORT FROM THE ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR / EDUCATION ADVISOR ANNUAL REPORT

KOBE has a full-time Assistant to the Director/Education Advisor whose role it is to oversee projects occurring within and external to KOBE. The following are the highlights of some of the projects where contribution, assistance and guidance have been made this year.

New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

This is the first time that the teachers of the KO schools and KO programs are able to access the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), as part of their Ontario College of Teachers certification. Participants access ongoing professional development over videoconference and in person conferencing and job shadowing opportunities from Keewatin Patricia District School Board staff. There are 34 teachers working towards their NTIP notation working within KO community schools and/or KOBE programming, with an additional four teacher observers.

EQAO

For the continued access to the EQAO assessment, KOBE provides central billing option to the KO community schools. There have also been arrangements made to receive board-wide analysis of results. This type of analysis is instrumental in assisting the KO communities to work towards strengthening their literacy and numeracy strategies across the tribal council territory. The staff has also received guidance on assessment preparations.

Partnerships

KOBE is fortunate to have partnered with many organizations with similar goals and serve to strengthen education opportunities for First Nations students.

Our partnerships:

Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

This partnership was initiated in October 2016 to enhance educational services and opportunities for students and staff. Among other areas of focus, the agreement includes new teacher support, capacity building, learning supports, and principal mentoring.

KOBE-CISCO Connected North Partnership

This partnership was established in 2015 with Deer Lake and Keewaywin First Nation Schools and provides technology investment that offers our students the opportunity to access expert subject teachers, tour various facilities/sites and visit other Indigenous students across Canada. This partnership was expanded to Poplar Hill and North Spirit Lake First Nation schools in October 2016.

Teach for Canada

KOBE works with Teach for Canada to recruit excellent teacher candidates for the community schools and Keewaytinook Internet High School (KiHS). This partnership was established in April 2016 for all KO schools with a total of 12 teachers hired for the 2016-2017 school year.

KOBE Programming Support

KOBE represents the interests of KO students in their communities and studying at schools away from home. Keewaytinook Okimakanak Secondary Student Services (KOSSS) and KiHS students sometimes require an individual to advocate for their interests. Other support is provided through contributing towards the implementation of the Dryden House Pilot and encouraging in-person visits to Pelican Falls First Nations High School students.

Advisory Services

Advisory services are provided to the Keewaytinook Okimakanak communities through regular community visits. Continuous support is provided to the local Education Directors and Chief and council are regularly updated on education developments to ensure that KOBE funding applications reflect the Truth and Reconciliation Recommendations and Thunder Bay Inquest Recommendations. It is also a responsibility to promote and implement KO Chiefs resolutions as it pertains to education. Assistance is also available in school effectiveness planning for the KO schools, KiHS and KOSSS.

Additionally, a position is currently being held with KPDSB as the First Nations Representative Trustee. The trustee advocates for all Indigenous students attending KPDSB schools. Such work includes providing insight and advice into the programming offered to the Keewaytinook Okimakanak secondary students attending Queen Elizabeth District High School and Dryden High School and sharing Indigenous perspectives into the support services to support student achievement.

Desta Buswa

Assistant to the Director / Education Advisor

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

OUR COMMUNITIES

Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education serves six communities in northwestern Ontario.

DEER LAKE

Deer Lake First Nation School

Kindergarten to Grade 9 | Students: 275 | Staff: 35

Education Director: Oscar Meekis

Principal: Stephan Doyon, Year 3



FORT SEVERN New school opened Fall 2016

Wasaho Cree Nation School

Kindergarten to Grade 8 | Students: 87 | Staff: 18

Education Director: Moses Kakekaspan

Principal: Quirino Ragub, Year 2



KEEWAYWIN

Keewaywin First Nation School

Kindergarten to Grade 8 | Students: 104 | Staff: 17

Education Director: David Thompson

Principal: Balan Menon, Year 1



NORTH SPIRIT LAKE

Victoria Linklater Memorial School

Kindergarten to Grade 8 | Students: 78 | Staff: 13

Education Program Coordinator: Adrian Lawrence, Year 4



POPLAR HILL New school opened Fall 2016

Ahgwahbuush Memorial School

Kindergarten to Grade 8 | Students: 134 | Staff: 24

Education Director: Donald Moose

Principal: Rocky Landon, Year 2



McDOWELL LAKE

Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education also provides services to the community of McDowell Lake First Nation. There is no elementary school located in this community.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | FIRST NATION STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAM

The First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP) is designed by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to help support First Nation educators through proposal-based funding. The funding is designed to support the ongoing needs of First Nation youth from Kindergarten to Grade 12 on reserve. With this funding, KOBE staff work with the communities to develop and deliver relevant and meaningful activities in the areas of reading and writing (literacy), mathematics (numeracy) and encouraging students to remain in school (student retention). [Source: www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca]

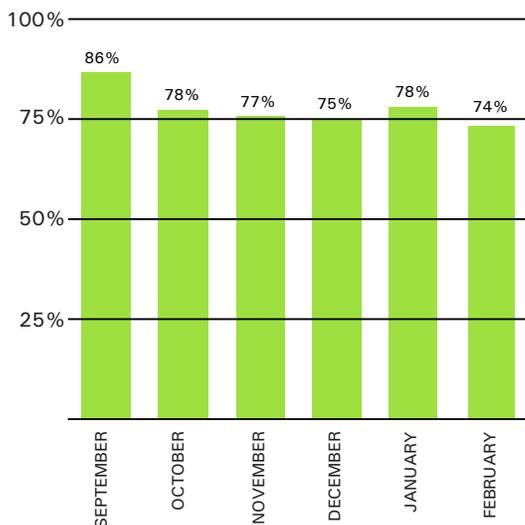
FNSSP Employees

Through the FNSSP proposal, KOBE has been able to hire the following staff to support the five KO schools in the areas of literacy, numeracy, student retention, and technology:

- Jonathan Woolley, FNSSP Coordinator
- Annette Berry, Early Literacy Lead
- Rose Kakekagumick, Literacy/Numeracy Lead (Grades 4 to 9)
- Stephanie Mushinski, Assessment Lead
- Thomas Doherty, Student Retention Lead
- Katie Burch, 21st Century Technology Lead

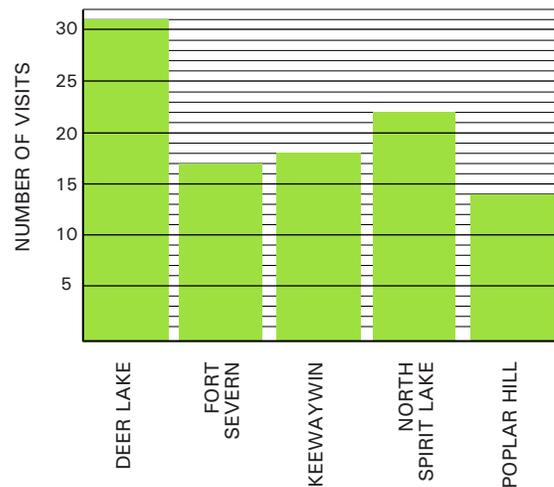
In the following pages, you will find summaries of the activities and projects that the KOBE FNSSP staff has provided to the staff and students in our communities from August 2016 to March 2017.

ATTENDANCE REPORTS



Monthly Attendance Reports 2016/2017
KO Community Schools

COMMUNITY VISITS



Each FNSSP employee must travel to every community at least three times during the school year. The chart represents community visits to date by all KO Education Program employees since August 2016.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | LITERACY

One of the goals of the KOBE Strategic Plan is to improve the literacy achievement levels by increasing the percentage of students who are meeting the grade level expectations in reading and writing. All staff work towards this goal with two teachers hired to direct projects for Early Literacy (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and Literacy (Grades 4 to 9). Here are some highlights from this year's initiatives in literacy learning.

Levelled Literacy Intervention Kits

The reading intervention support system by Fountas and Pinnell was purchased for each school that did not have it in their resources. The purpose of the Fountas and Pinnell system is to fill in gaps in Grades 1 to 3 in the area of reading. Teachers also received training and ongoing direction in the correct usage of the system to maximize the benefits to their students.

Reading A-Z Licenses & I Love Reading Bag

Each school received a Reading A-Z renewal on their license to use the online resources to support literacy activities for students at home. KOBE is also printing and assembling hard copies of the booklets to send home with each student in Kindergarten to Grade 3. Each student receives a sling bag containing booklets that are appropriate for each individual student's reading level as assessed by the classroom teacher.

Martin Aboriginal Screening Tool

A screening tool for children from 18 months to Grade 1 is currently being developed in the community of North Spirit Lake. The assessment will assist in determining where children are in their learning and development and will be used to establish plans for their education. The screening will include members of the Chief and council, school, nursing station, Headstart program and community elders.

Confederation College Teacher Assistant Program

Under the Literacy portfolio, a teacher assistant (TA) training program has been developed which includes curriculum that is specific to the needs of our communities. There are currently 12 Teacher Assistants participating in the program from four communities. Participants attend weekly classes delivered via videoconference from instructors at Confederation College in Thunder Bay. It is a two year program that will provide individuals with the skills they require to support the students in their schools.



Professional Development

Through a series of school- and teacher-specific trainings, schools are receiving direct and indirect support in the area of oral communication, reading comprehension, and writing. During each school visit, the Early Literacy Lead and Literacy Lead meet with staff to discuss individual concerns and develop strategies and provide resources to support the needs of the school. Teachers in the EQAO assessment grades have also received training in moderated marking.

In February, all Literacy Lead teachers attended the Reading for the Love of It conference in Toronto, Ontario.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | NUMERACY

The KOBE Numeracy Lead and other board and local staff are working towards strengthening the mathematics skills of our students in many ways including providing fun and interesting resources for students as well as increasing support for local staff through professional development opportunities.

The following projects are examples of how KOBE is working towards the Strategic Plan goal to improve the numeracy achievement levels by increasing the percentage of students who are meeting the grade level expectations in mathematics.

Professional Development

KOBE is providing cost of registration for all interested teachers for a course in mathematics instruction offered by Stanford University in an online format.

Plans are being made for the Numeracy Lead from each school to attend the Ontario Association for Mathematics Education conference in Kingston, Ontario this coming May.

Math Kits & Family Math Night

A math kit was developed which included a booklet of games to promote using math skills in a fun way. Primary grade students (Kindergarten to Grade 3) also received a bag of dice, while Grades 4 to 8 students received a deck of cards and K4 students received a board game. The kits were delivered to each household in every community for children in Kindergarten to Grade 8.

To promote the math kits, throughout community visits in January and February, KOBE staff ran a “Family Math Night” with school staff in each community. Students were invited to bring their families to attend a one-hour event held after school hours in the school gymnasium. Groups enjoyed playing games that were included in the math booklet.

JUMP Math

Each school was provided with the JUMP Math workbooks for Grades 1 to 8. Teachers received training on this resource through a webinar presentation in September. Teachers also have regular communication and support through the Math Lead.

EQAO

To assist teachers in the Grade 3 and Grade 6 classrooms, a binder of past five years of examinations and exemplars was provided to each teacher in the testing year grades. A workshop on how to use these resources was provided in each school which included instruction on how to use the Ontario Expectation Guides.



KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | STUDENT RETENTION

All staff work toward the goal of ensuring students are provided with the opportunities for success. This year, a Student Retention Lead was hired to coordinate initiatives to encourage students to attend school and participate in learning occasions through traditional and experiential methods.

The following projects demonstrate how KOBE is reaching our Strategic Plan goal to improve student enjoyment and engagement in learning through culturally appropriate teachings and authentic learning opportunities.

Land-Based Learning

Staff and students participated in KOBE lead, land-based educational programming including lessons in snaring and ice fishing. Staff from Keewaywin First Nation School also attended a professional development session that focussed on how land-based delivery programming can become cross-curricular in the classroom with hands-on activities.

Community Careers Skills Development Program

A series of courses were organized and delivered to interested schools. The courses are provided by external trainers.

North Spirit Lake (Grades 7 & 8): KOBE Chainsaw Safety Course

Deer Lake (Grade 9): Hunter Safety Certification Course

Keewaywin: C.P.R and First Aid Training

Upcoming:

- Trapping Certification Course
- Hunter Safety Certification Course
- Boating Safety Certification Course
- Small Motor Trouble-shooting Course
- Standard First Aid Training Course
- Netting Training Course

KOBE Winter Indigenous Games

In February, 42 students from four communities participated in the first KOBE Winter Indigenous Games hosted at Deer Lake First Nation School. The students competed in four events: snaring, snowshoe orienteering, shelter building and ice fishing. A travel subsidy of \$2,500 was provided to each school as well as space for up to 16 student participants and two adult chaperones. Participants received a commemorative tuque and participation medal as well as individual trophies for winning an event.





Student Soaring Conference

A delegation of 17 students and five chaperones travelled to Ottawa, Ontario for the Indspire Student Soaring Conference and Gala on March 23 and 24. The students from KO schools, KiHS, and KOSSS attended workshops geared towards student academic success that will help them in secondary and post-secondary education. The students toured a community college to see the programming as well as attended a Gala that featured the best of First Nation, Métis and Inuit student achievement throughout the country.

Science Engagement

All Grades 3 to 8 teachers participated in a professional development opportunity developed by Science North and delivered by videoconference. Teachers participated in a sample lesson that they could use with their students.

Additionally, two students from Deer Lake First Nation School and two students from Keewaywin First Nation School travelled to Winnipeg to participate in the Manitoba First Nation Resource Centre Science Fair for two days in March.



Guest Speaker Series

KOBE staff have been arranging for individuals to provide the KO community school students with engaging informational sessions. Guest speakers connect with the classes via videoconference and present about their work and what is needed to be successful. Presenters to date: Kara McLeod, police constable and professional boxer; Patrick Hunter, woodland artist and Shy-Anne Hovorka, musician.

Career Videos

A videographer has been contracted to interview individuals from the Red Lake area to explain the type of job they do, the job requirements and the type of formal education needed to attain the position. Once completed, the interviews will be compiled and presented during the KOBE Career Fair to be held in May.

Professional Development

The Student Retention lead from each school attended the Indspire Educational conference from November 22 to 25 in Toronto, Ontario. This conference was geared toward providing educators with professional development that focussed on Land-based and student retention activities. One of the workshops attended was a presentation and discussion on how to improve student attendance by utilizing Elders in the classroom.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | ASSESSMENT

The Special Education team works to support the needs of our students in each community through professional development opportunities and direct and indirect programming services. The team consists of an Assessment Lead, Speech-Language Pathologist, Communicative Disorders Assistant and a Special Education Consultant.

This year we hired a full-time Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) through our partnership with Keewatin-Patricia District School Board. The SLP provides ongoing, specific support to students year-round. Each community contributes from their High-Cost Special Education funding to support this position. We have also hired a Communicative Disorders Assistant to support the SLP with delivery of Speech-Language services. This has been a great addition to our program and we hope to continue moving ahead in the coming years. The following are some of the ways the Special Education team supports the individual and collective needs in the Keewatinook Okimakanak communities.

School and Student Assessments

Our teachers have asked for user-friendly tools that provide informative and accurate data about the needs of their students. A list of recommendations for student and school assessment tools that are best suited to the students in our communities is being compiled and will be presented to the schools. It is our hope that all schools will select a common assessment tool that can be used across the board for consistency and long-term data collection.

Cognitive Assessment Services

Beginning in November, each school received a contract to provide cognitive assessments for their students. An educational psychologist has conducted 33 assessments to date and will continue through the end of the school year. Students are prioritized at the school level with tests administered in person at the school. The reports are sent to the school and follow-up is conducted via videoconference or phone call. These reports are important for the identification of cognitive and learning disabilities and for providing referrals to medical services and are required by schools for High-Cost Special Education funding.

Special Education Resource Teacher Support

The Assessment Lead has been providing guidance and professional development to each of the Special Education Resource Teachers (SERT) on an individual and as-needed basis. Assistance has been provided in the areas of development of Individual Education Plans (IEP), consent forms, information handouts, student-specific resources as well as support with the

computer reporting system Dadavan for developing and managing student IEPs. Professional development in Special Education workshops have also been delivered to staff in the areas of differentiated instruction, accommodations, and assistive technology.



KOBE Special Education Plan and Handbook

A Special Education Plan and Handbook is being developed for KOBE. These documents will be relevant and reflective of the needs of our students and support the principal, SERT and teachers with their role, tasks and reporting.

EQAO

Schools have received support through discussion of preliminary results, registration and training in providing accommodations to students during test administration.

Speech-Language Services

Assessments and Reports

The Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) visited all five communities from October to early December. Approximately 75 assessments were conducted and goals have been established for all students on the caseload.

Speech-Language Consultation

During community visits, consultation was provided to teachers, classroom TA's and some parents on how they can support a student in their class with speech or language concerns.

Online Therapy Sessions

Therapy began in January for half days and is now operating at a full day for each community. Therapy consists of one-on-one or group sessions involving language, communication, articulation, motor speech or fluency for approximately 30-minute sessions via videoconference. Each school receives consistent and regular services tailored to each student and their goals.

With the addition of a Communication Disorders Assistant (CDA) to the team a greater number of students can be seen on a regular basis.

Speech-Language Assistants (SLA) Community Level

Each school hired an individual from their community to assist with speech sessions and carry-over through the First Nation and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES) funding. They attend therapy sessions with the students and provide practice between sessions. The SLA is involved in the regular goal practice in school as identified by the SLP.

Starting in February, a series of training sessions began to assist the SLA in developing additional skills they require to assist students with speech and language practice. These are conducted via videoconference and are school and student-specific.



Resources

In January, each school received approximately \$1,200 in resources to be used during and after online therapy sessions. These materials include manipulatives and games used to encourage students to work on specific speech and language skills. In addition, we have also been developing and providing high- and low-tech augmentative communication tools for non-verbal students and visual supports for students who struggle with following directions and/or routines.

In addition, several sets of Language games and activities are also being prepared and sent to each school to be used by the Speech-Language Assistant to support the indirect services we are providing to our schools. Other resources are developed and purchased on an as-needed basis.



KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FNSSP | TECHNOLOGY

Through the partnership with the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board, KOBE has seconded a teacher to lead and promote technology initiatives. Here are some of the highlights from the technology portfolio this year.

iPads

KOBE purchased iPads and protective cases to support the one iPad to every five students ratio for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 students. Teachers were given professional development on using the iPads and managing them in the classroom. Deer Lake First Nation School is piloting a student documentation program called *Sesame* that coincides with the new Kindergarten report card.

360 Camera

Students in Grades 7 and 8 and KiHS have been challenged to put their community on the map. In January, each school received one 360 camera including additional accessories of a waterproof case, waterproof camera protector and a selfie stick. The purpose of the project is to provide images for use in the 'street view' on Google Maps as there are currently none available.

Dreambox Pilot Project

Dreambox is a math intervention program hosted online that identifies areas of need and is used to fill in gaps in mathematical learning. Beginning in November, the communities of Fort Severn, Keewaywin, and North Spirit Lake opted to participate in a pilot project in their Grades 3 to 8 classes. If the pilot is successful, all schools will receive a subscription in the following school year.

Lego Robotics

In January, each school received a kit containing components to make a Lego Robot. The kits are being used to introduce students to robotics and will develop into an after school program in the coming school year. Next year, we plan to partner with Lego First Robotics League to start after school robotics clubs in each community.

Hapara Dashboard

This technology is used to manage and monitor the websites that students are using during instructional time. Each school has a license and all Technology Lead teachers have received training on this program.

Read and Write for Google

Read and Write for Google is assistive technology that works within Google Apps and any web browser. It provides the user options for speech-to-text and text-to-speech to assist with reading and writing. This began as a pilot project and is now fully operational in each school. Students will be using this tool to support them during the EQAO assessment.

KOBE Website

On March 27, a new KOBE website will be launched at www.koeducation.ca. The new site will feature information about KOBE and the work we are doing to support each school. It will also be a platform for sharing resources and professional development.

Professional Development

The Technology Lead teacher from each school was invited to participate in a weekend Google Summit held in Toronto, Ontario. The teachers participated in workshops to learn about using Google Apps for Education. They also attended a one-day SMART board training session.

During each community visit, school staff receives training in the use of iPads, Chromebooks, Dadavan, SMART boards and other technologies, applications and software as requested by school staff.



Breakout EDU

At the Google Summit, attendees were introduced to Breakout Kits for Education. The Breakout kit is similar to an "escape room". Students are challenged to solve challenges in order to uncover the code that will open a wooden box within a limited amount of time. The Breakout kits can be structured for any subject and lesson. Using the kits highly increases student engagement, teamwork and collaboration. Deer Lake First Nation School has been using the kits for an after school math club.

NEW PATHS FOR EDUCATION

The New Paths for Education is developed through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. The program funds projects and activities designed to improve the quality of education in First Nation schools and to enhance the educational experiences of students, teachers, administrators, parents and communities. KOBE has hired a First Nations Languages and Perspectives Lead to coordinate initiatives within the New Paths proposal.

Curriculum Development

Consultation meetings with elders and community members have been occurring to assist in the direction of the development of curriculum that is relevant and reflective of each community.

Professional Development

In February, all Native Language teachers travelled to Kejick Bay to visit the school and its outdoor education program.

For two days in March, all Native Language teachers will travel to Thunder Bay to meet with educators from the Lakehead District School Board. They will have an opportunity to see various approaches to how First Nation content is integrated into the curriculum.

Educational Services

As part of the Languages policy framework initiative continuum, elders from each community have been invited to partake in an Elders Languages Working Group and each school will receive instructional materials and learning resources to support First Nations language instruction integrated across the curriculum.

Outdoor Classroom Structure

In January, materials were purchased towards the construction of an outdoor classroom structure for each community. The structures have been built and are in transit and will be reassembled in each community when the weather permits.



FIRST NATION AND INUIT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY (FNIYES)

FNIYES supports activities focused on the development of work experience, information about careers, and opportunities to develop skills in obtaining employment to develop a career.

Together, KiHS and KOBE submitted a joint proposal for FNIYES on behalf of the five KO communities. The funds utilised under FNIYES support initiatives implemented by the Student Retention Lead.

FNIYES Mentored Works positions:

- 2 Deer Lake
- 1 North Spirit Lake
- 1 Keewaywin
- 1 Fort Severn
- 1 Poplar Hill
- 1 Sioux Lookout office
- 1 Balmertown office

KEEWAYTINOOK INTERNET HIGH SCHOOL

REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Keewaytinook is an Oji-Cree term for “northern”

Keewaytinook Internet High School (KiHS) delivers accredited high school courses through an online education platform. We have approximately 230 students on our nominal roll, but over 400 have registered at some point this year. This year, we have 11 classroom teachers, five community classroom assistants, four travelling teachers and four administrative and support staff.

This year has been successful for our students with 131 regular credits achieved in Term 1 and 146 achieved Term 2. These are impressive numbers, as it is rare to see Term 2 numbers higher than Term 1 results. Also, this achievement exceeds our previous year’s results by ten credits. Term 3 results will be available shortly. Additionally, have had approximately 325 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) credits achieved to date.

Graduates

There are 16 students on track as potential graduates for the 2016-2017 school year. We are working closely with them to help them achieve their goals. Impressively, six of the students in Fort Severn are set to graduate in May.

Dryden Pilot Project

Of the six students identified for the Dryden Pilot Project, five earned at least one credit and several earned two credits prior to moving to Dryden in January. The students are now taking a combination of Dryden High School courses and KiHS courses.

Funding for new Classrooms

With a student population of over 200, KiHS could warrant the equivalent of its own school building in each partner community. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada has been contacted about possible future capital investment in KiHS classrooms and buildings. KiHS has not received this type of funding before. A proposal will be developed to access funding for a standalone classroom in each community with the possibility of an attached apartment. This could help alleviate the infrastructure demand on communities.

Local School Projects

A number of local school projects have been developed utilizing funding from the New Paths for Education, First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES) and First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP).

Some of the initiatives that have taken place this year:

- Land-based and cultural activities such as ice fishing, snowshoeing and snaring
- Purchase of outdoor equipment including snowshoes and inflatable canoes
- A significant contribution has been made to the outdoor classrooms being purchased and sent to Keewaytinook Okimakanak community schools.
- Development of new courses with community focus. The courses are in Resource Management and Environmental Science.
- A student trip to Ottawa, Ontario will take place in March for students to attend the Soaring Conference.
- Videos from The Elder Language Project will be shared on the KiHS website.

Kevin Dempsey
KiHS Principal

Our Staff

Principal: Kevin Dempsey
Vice Principal: Freda Kenny (half-time)
Guidance Services: Lynda Kakepetum
Educational Secretary: Erin Litwin
(Ayano Dempsey, covering leave)
ICT Administration: Aaron Hardy
FNSSP Lead: Linda Johnson
Cooperative Education Lead: Lorne Goring
Special Education: Melissa Black
Course Specialist: Angela Batsford

KiHS Teachers

Bearskin Lake: Thomas Choong
Deer Lake: Mona Meekis
Fort Severn: Kathleen Koostachin
Fort William: Cathy Rodger
Keewaywin: Ben Gallup
Mishkeegogamang: Tammy West
(Don Mills, substitute during leave)
Nibinamik: Erik Tu
North Spirit Lake: Lindsay Cavanaugh
Poplar Hill: Anita Locs
Sachigo Lake: Simon Kim

Weagamow Lake: Raj Budhram
Dryden High School: Judy Barratt

KiHS Classroom Assistants

Fort Severn: Levis Miles, Sherrie Miles
(part-time)
Weagamow Lake: Ira Benson
Mishkeegogamang: Jolynn Bottle
North Spirit Lake: Thomasine Meekis
(part-time)
Nibinamik: Isabel Sofea
(part-time)

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK SECONDARY SCHOOL SERVICES REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Keewaytinook Okimakanak Secondary School Services (KOSSS) offers support services to First Nations students who leave their home communities to pursue secondary school education. Support staff and student counsellors are located in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, Dryden and Pelican Falls Centre. Core services include administering boarding homes, on-call student transportation, 24/7 student support and monitoring, student programming and planned activities, providing student counselling, workshops, treatment and intervention and tuition and accommodation agreements. KOSSS also coordinates programs to support student success and keeping a strong connection between students, their families and culture through videoconference family visit, cultural and recreational programs and tutoring.

Since 2009, KOSSS has been administering the Off-Reserve Secondary Education and Student Support Services for the six Keewaytinook Okimakanak communities. There were 126 students enrolled in September and 94 as of March.

School/Location	Number of Students
Pelican Falls First Nation High School	37
Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School	28
Queen Elizabeth High School	14
Dryden High School	6
Thunder Bay	4
Winnipeg	4
New Brunswick	1
Total	94

Student Performance

Overall, all our students have worked towards a favourable outcome to achieve their credits for the first semester. First semester results were:

Queen Elizabeth High School:
5 made honour roll; 91% credits achieved

Pelican Falls First Nation High School:
5 made honour roll; 83% credits achieved

Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School:
7 made honour roll; 93% credits achieved

Dryden High School:
1 made honour roll; 100% credits achieved

Student Retention

The retention rate has increased over the years to an average of 75% to 80% in the last several years. The credit achievement rate has increased to seven to eight credits per year. The graduation rates average 20 to 25 graduates per year from approximately 140 enrolled students.

Graduates

KOSSS has 25 potential graduates.

Queen Elizabeth High School: 2
Pelican Falls First Nation High School: 7
Thunder Bay: 15
Dryden High School: 1

Total: 25

Student Accommodation

Students have been staying in boarding homes for the past six years. Boarding home parents are committed to assisting, nurturing, and supporting our students to succeed. Currently, we have 17 boarding homes in Thunder Bay, 11 in Sioux Lookout, four in Winnipeg and one in Dryden plus the Dryden Pilot House which can accommodate eight and one in New Brunswick. We are looking to find additional homes, purchasing houses or building a residence to give more students the opportunity to come out for school in the fall.



Student Transportation

KOSSS has acquired four twelve-passenger vans, one of which will be used in the Dryden Pilot, and a minivan. Students travel on coach bus to Red Lake and Sioux Lookout before flying them to and from their communities.

Staffing

The bedrock of our program is our staff. Although Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada provides for a staff ratio of two staff to 120 students, we have an average of 25 to 33 staff to better support and monitor our students. Having some staff who are KO band members is an enormous asset to the success of our students. Providing sustainable staffing resources for the program can only enhance the success rate, support, and assistance our students require daily.

Inquest Recommendations

Nishnawbe Aski Nation lobbied for resources from INAC on behalf of the four parties to the Student Inquest. INAC approved \$250,000 to be distributed to the four parties to hire an Inquest worker to lead or assist in carrying out the Inquest Student Recommendations. Keewaytinook Okimakanak has received \$62,500 to hire this individual who began in March.

Student Activities

KOSSS team took students camping for four days this fall. This was the first time this was done. The natural reaction and involvement in nature was incredible and validates the fact that our youth are still comfortable in nature and doing land-based activities.

We also took students to an NHL game and to Bon Jovi concert in Minnesota as a reward for student effort. Our students continue to take part in three annual youth retreats at Beaver Lake Camp outside of Dryden, Ontario.

At our two Activity Centres (Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout), our centre staff are constantly planning after school activities to keep students engaged. Our focus is shifting towards native language and culture-based programs in efforts to support language retention and revitalization. It is vital that students are engaged and given the opportunity to experience a wide variety

of activities that will help them in their studies, social skills, and promote career-oriented plans for them. Programs like the First Nation Student Success Program and New Paths for Education are crucial to the success rate of our students.

Pre-Orientation Site Visits

Working with the communities, our program was able to offer resources to the five KO communities to bring out potential KOSSS students to visit and experience first-hand some of the urban secondary schools they are interested in attending. This allows for the students to make a better-informed decision whether they feel ready to leave home for school, or remain and pursue courses at KiHS.



Traditional Week

For the first time, students had the opportunity to participate in traditional activities back in their communities during the fall traditional weeks. The program received great reviews from parents and families. This was made possible by additional resources provided by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Rob Kakegamic

KOSSS Program Coordinator

K-NET SERVICES

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR

Kuhkenah is an Oji-Cree term for “everyone, everywhere”

The Kuhkenah Network (K-Net) is a First Nations owned and operated information and communications technology service provider. K-Net provides telecommunication infrastructure and application support in First Nation communities across north-western Ontario. K-Net is leading the way for rural and remote First Nations communities in Ontario.

As part of the First Nation Student Success Program, K-Net provides services and support to the Keewatinook Okimakanak communities, KOBE, KOSSS, and KiHS. Some of these services are Dadavan, Google Chromebooks and G-Suite for Education.

Dadavan Outcomes Student Information System

Dadavan is database software for schools to use in:

- Keeping attendance
- Writing and printing report cards
- Maintaining student records
- Generating reports necessary for funding and enrolment
- Helping teachers prepare marks and lesson plans
- Keeping track of student assessments and evaluations
- Parent communication

Each school has their own Dadavan server located in the school that they manage. Each school has a staff member known as a Database Administrator that is responsible for the maintenance of their Dadavan server. K-Net provides support and training to the school staff so they can use Dadavan throughout the school year including a yearly workshop for the Database Administrators, a community visit, and ongoing tech support.



Google Chromebooks and G-Suite for Education

Google Chromebooks are laptops that each student can use within their classroom to help them with their learning. The chromebooks use the web-based G-Suite for Education set of tools for things like email, Docs, Spreadsheets, Slides, and many of the other applications and websites that can be found online.

These tools are used by many schools across Canada and it will help the students in their academic career, wherever they choose to go.

The school, KOBE, and K-Net manage the Chromebooks to make it easier for teachers and students to use them for educational activities. As part of this program, K-Net has been working with the schools to implement:

- Better Wifi coverage
- Faster Internet speeds
- Content Filtering and Website blocking

KOBE has hired a Technology Lead that has experience with using Chromebooks in the classroom. This teacher has been working with the staff in the KO community schools to help with integrating the technology into the classroom.

Penny Carpenter

K-Net Director

The Governments' mandate was to kill the Indian in the child. Now KOBE's mandate is to create a healthy knowledge of history of the First Nation people in a child. The child will regain their identity and roots.

RECONNECT

In the past, children were happy and healthy. Parents, grandparents, and elders were teaching young children to hunt, skin the rabbit, sew, beadwork and shared the language by speaking it. The elders were the teachers. Parents were the teachers. The entire community was working together to raise the children and keep the culture alive.

When the government took the young children to residential school the system killed the teachings to many families. It took away the connection and working together.

For many years parents and elders were not involved in schools or children's education. This created a disconnection and much of the culture and language was lost. When the children returned to their homes they did not feel that link with their beliefs. Many were ashamed of who they were. None got a real education in the residential schools. When they became parents they did not know how to bring up their children. Many lost the language they had spoken at home years ago. This has affected many of our generations of First Nations people.

KOBE visited the communities to find out from the grass roots what needs to be done. The outcome of the visits is that people are saying to start working together for the children. The message is grass roots has to be involved in the education system and the schools. Communities want their children to be taught about their culture, language, and history.

For many years the government or top educators controlled the school system. The grass roots were not given a chance to be involved in this structure.

With KOBE this will change and will operate not from the top down but rather from the grass roots up. This will create a reconnect with culture, language, and education. It will make healthy, proud, and successful young people who will eventually grow into adulthood and will bring up their children to be the same. They will get a good education and know who they are and where they came from. Our youth will excel knowing the entire community and the system is now behind them. They will feel loved and appreciated for this and in turn will grow to be loving and caring individuals. The roots of our next generations will be strong and run deep once again.

I am so honored to be a part of this new KOBE board and to assist in the formation and implementation of something I believe in. It has been far too long that we lived under the governments' system. A government that does not know or appreciate our Nation. Our People are the only ones that can create this reconnect between people, culture, language, and education.

Elder Abe Kakepetum

*As spoken at the Assembly of First Nations First Nation Directors of Education National Forum
March 2, 2017 Calgary, Alberta*



Keewatinook Okimakanak is committed to ensuring their communities have access to quality education programming.



Deer Lake



Fort Severn



Keewaywin



McDowell Lake



North Spirit Lake



Poplar Hill