

*Forge your path.
Leave your mark.*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 - 2030



ANISHINABEK
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

“ Our roots and guiding principles –
7 Grandfather Gifts,
7 Generation Thinking
are our culture and our
compass. ”



Celebrating 30 years

OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ON OUR TERRITORY

Since its establishment in 1994, AEI has been at the forefront of delivering dynamic and culturally resonant programming tailored to the unique needs of First Nations. Our approach nurtures a supportive and welcoming learning environment that upholds the cherished traditional values of sharing, caring, and respect.

At AEI, we offer a diverse array of full-time and community-based programs across our two vibrant campuses. Our programs are thoughtfully designed to minimize stress for students who may be balancing commitments to family, community, and work. This thoughtful approach ensures that our students can maintain their employment while engaging fully in their educational advancement.

Committed to equipping students for success in a rapidly evolving world, AEI's doors are wide open to all aspiring learners. There's no application fee to hold you back—just countless opportunities to move forward.

Join us at AEI, where you can **forge your path** and **leave your mark!**

Acknowledgements

The Anishinabek Educational Institute would like to thank all the staff, campus managers and especially students and the community for contributing to our strategic vision. Your voices are our future.

Director of Education: Mindy Taylor

Campus Managers: Jennifer Fletcher, Frank Cooper

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“ Together, we will continue to build a future where education is not just a pathway to opportunity but a bridge to greater achievements and community well-being. ”



WELCOME TO OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2030

A message from the DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

It's my pleasure to share with you our roadmap for the future—a strategic plan that embodies our commitment to growth, innovation, and community engagement. This plan is not just a document; it's a reflection of our collective vision and dedication to enhancing the educational experiences of our students across our two vibrant campuses.

At AEI, we recognize that learning is a journey that varies from one individual to another. That's why we've anchored our strategy around four key priorities: Diverse Learning Paths, Innovative Approaches, Enhanced Partnerships, and Quality Service. Each priority is designed to cater to the unique needs and aspirations of our students, ensuring that every learner finds a path that resonates with their personal and professional goals.

In the upcoming years, you can expect AEI to unfold a host of exciting initiatives as part of our commitment to being at the forefront of educational development. We are excited to introduce new program offerings that will cater to emerging industries and cultural teachings, ensuring that our curriculum remains relevant and impactful. Our learning modalities will also expand to include more flexible options, such as online courses,

in-person classes, and condensed programs designed to fit the diverse schedules and learning styles of our students.

To our community members, staff, Chiefs, Leadership and especially to our students, this strategic plan is for you. It's a promise of our commitment to not only meet but exceed your educational expectations. We invite you to join us on this exciting journey, to engage with us, challenge us, and grow with us. Together, we will continue to build a future where education is not just a pathway to opportunity but a bridge to greater achievements and community well-being.

Nia:wen / Yaw^ko / Miigwetch / Thank you for being a part of our community and for supporting the vision that drives us forward.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Mindy Taylor

Mindy Taylor
Director of Education, AEI



“ Whether it’s through introducing innovative learning methods, strengthening partnerships, or ensuring the highest standards of service, we are dedicated to providing an environment that supports your aspirations and fosters your success. ”



*A word
from our*

CAMPUS MANAGERS

We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to our community members, staff, Chiefs in council, and especially our valued students as we present our strategic plan. This document serves as a blueprint for the continued growth and success of our two campuses, each vibrant with potential and promise.

Our campuses are more than just places of learning; they are thriving cultural communities where ideas are nurtured and futures are built. With our strategic plan guiding us, we are committed to enhancing the educational journey for every student, recognizing the unique path each individual walks. Whether it's through introducing innovative learning methods, strengthening partnerships, or ensuring the highest standards of service, we are dedicated to providing an environment that supports your aspirations and fosters your success.

We invite each of you to engage with this plan and explore the exciting opportunities it presents. Join us in shaping the future of education at AEI, where together we will achieve remarkable things and continue to make a meaningful impact in our communities.

Thank you for placing your trust in us and for your active participation in this collective journey. Let's make the most of this moment and move forward with enthusiasm and anticipation.

With heartfelt thanks,

Jennifer Fletcher

Jennifer Fletcher
Manager, Nipissing Campus

Frank Cooper

Frank Cooper
Manager, Munsee-Delaware Campus



STRATEGIC PLAN THEME

At the Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI), our strategic plan is visualized through the theme of **diverse paths in education**, each uniquely symbolized by **distinct footprints**: the moccasin, snowshoe, work boot, and sneaker. These footprints represent the varied lifelong journeys of our learners, each choosing their path based on personal aspirations and professional goals. This imagery captures the essence of the AEI's commitment to providing support based educational experiences deeply rooted in our cultures and traditions, respecting and enhancing each learner's journey toward academic and personal success.

AEI SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS



Over 900 graduates!

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ON TERRITORY FOR 30 YEARS!

Having opened its doors in June 1994, AEI has seen over 900 graduates go on to become Community Workers, Early Childhood Educators, Practical Nurses, Social Service Workers, Child Welfare Advocates, and accomplish so much in many fields.

The AEI office, strategically located in Nipissing First Nation, serves as the administrative and organizational heart of the Anishinabek Educational Institute. As AEI marks its 30th anniversary celebrating three decades of commitment to Anishinabek education and empowerment. This milestone highlights the enduring legacy and the impactful journey of AEI in providing culturally relevant education to First Nations students.

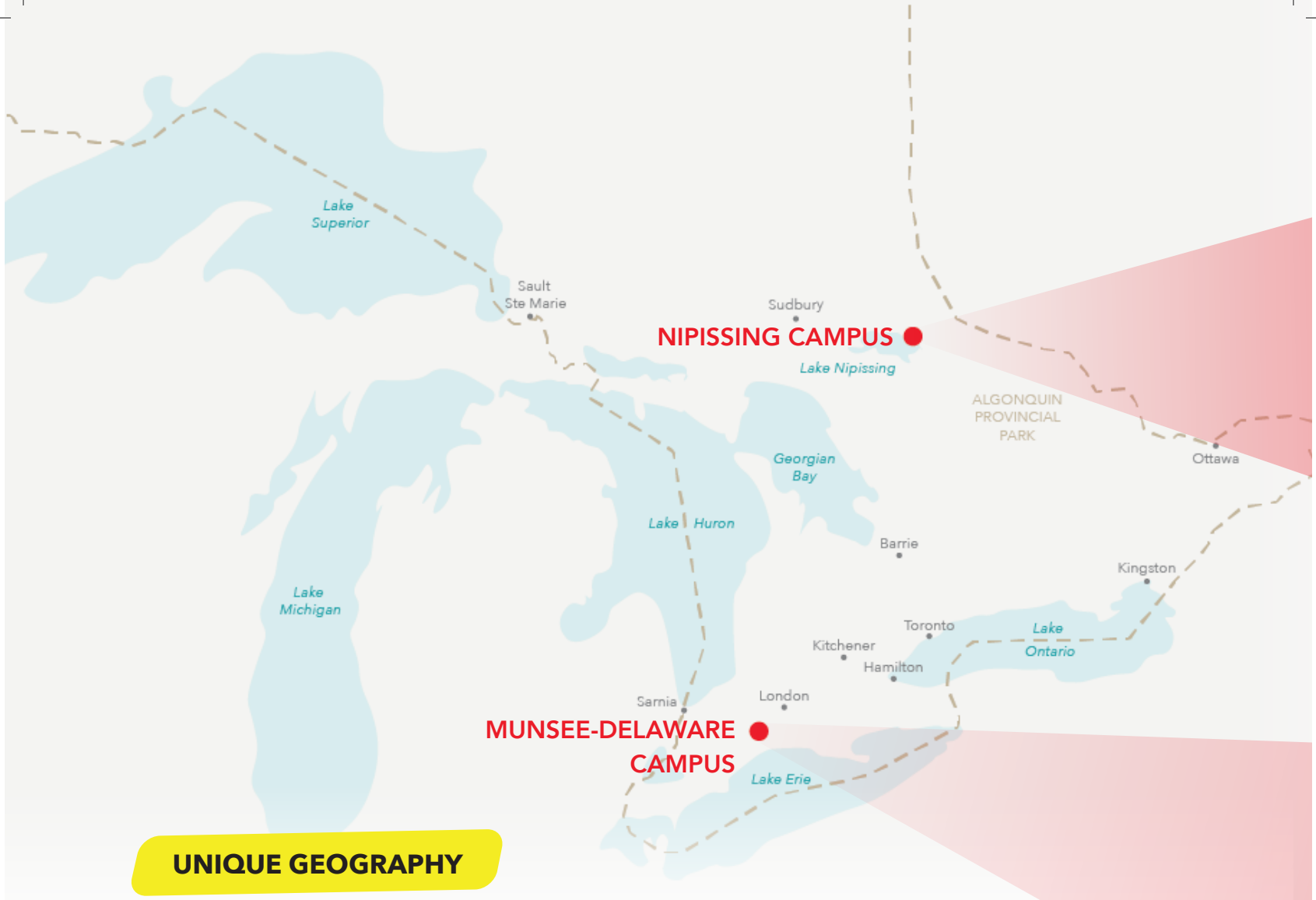
This central hub plays a crucial role in overseeing the operations, program development, and strategic planning across both campuses, ensuring that all educational offerings align with AEI's mission. The anniversary is not only a time to reflect on past achievements but also an opportunity to reinforce partnerships with educational leaders, government bodies, and community organizations.

The AEI coordinates resources and support services, ensuring that both campuses are well-equipped to deliver exceptional education and meet the evolving needs of their students and communities. Through leadership and dedication, the AEI embodies the institute's commitment to excellence and community engagement, driving forward the vision that has shaped 30 years of educational success.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, the AEI is more committed than ever to advancing the institute's impact, expanding its reach, and continuing to provide education that transforms lives and communities.

IN COMMUNITY

We offer special programs in various communities throughout the year.



UNIQUE GEOGRAPHY

The Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI) proudly operates two campuses, each strategically located to maximize access and provide equitable educational opportunities across a vast territory. Our decision to establish multiple campuses stems from a deep commitment to serving the diverse needs of First Nations communities spread over a large geographic area. By doing so, we ensure that more students have the opportunity to receive a culturally relevant, high-quality education without the burden of long-distance travel.

The Nipissing Campus, located in Nipissing First Nation, and the Munsee-Delaware Campus, situated within the Munsee-Delaware Nation, are pivotal in reaching a broader student population. This dual-campus approach allows AEI to deliver its programs effectively across the regions, making education more accessible and inclusive. It reflects our dedication to fostering educational equity by bringing learning closer to the students' communities, thus reducing barriers to access and participation.

These campuses serve not only as educational institutions but also as community hubs that strengthen local ties and support the socio-economic development of the regions they serve. By providing localized educational resources, AEI plays a critical role in empowering individuals and communities, thereby contributing to the vitality and resilience of First Nations across the territory. This strategy aligns with AEI's mission to offer education that is by and for Anishinabek People, ensuring that every learner finds a path that resonates with their personal and professional goals, right in the heart of their community.





NIPISSING CAMPUS

Set against the backdrop of picturesque Lake Nipissing, the Nipissing Campus of the Anishinabek Educational Institute is a thriving hub of academic excellence and cultural heritage. This campus is celebrated for its dynamic approach to education, blending rigorous academic standards with deep-rooted cultural values. With state-of-the-art facilities, Nipissing Campus offers a broad array of programs designed to empower students through knowledge and practical skills in fields ranging from Environmental Science to Indigenous Social Work. The campus environment promotes a rich tapestry of learning and personal growth, where students are encouraged to explore their identities and develop a profound connection with their communities.



MUNSEE-DELAWARE CAMPUS

At the heart of the Munsee-Delaware Nation lies AEI's Munsee-Delaware Campus, known for its intimate learning atmosphere and strong emphasis on community collaboration. This campus serves as a beacon of cultural preservation and education innovation, offering specialized programs that integrate Indigenous knowledge with essential modern skills. From healthcare to community services, its curriculum is crafted to address the needs and aspirations of the community it serves, fostering a generation of well-equipped and culturally competent leaders. The campus is a center for cultural engagement, hosting numerous workshops, seminars, and events that celebrate and sustain Indigenous traditions and practices.

Anishinabek Enjikinomaagaaswot

OUR MISSION

The Anishinabek Education Institute is mandated by the Anishinabek General Assembly (Res 94/13), to provide quality education and training programs for First Nation Anishinabek communities. The Anishinabek Educational Institute will provide community-based programming which will better prepare the student success in an ever-changing world. The mission shall always be by and for Anishinabek People; at our pleasure, at our pace, and by our own standards.

PRINCIPLES OF THE SEVEN *Grandfather Teachings*

As guiding principles, we are guided by the Seven Gifts of the Seven Grandfathers which provide a framework that is conducive to learning in an environment where every individual is granted the freedom to grow. The AEI Staff, Instructors and Students are responsible for ensuring and maintaining this environment.

To cherish knowledge is to know *Wisdom*. The AEI has been given the mandate of the Anishinabek communities to deliver quality and culturally based education. Students are given the responsibility to take ownership for their education.

To know *Love* is to know peace. The AEI is committed to creating and ensuring a safe environment where both students and instructors can express their values and beliefs. Students are expected to respect the values and beliefs of others, just as they would be respected.

To honour all of Creation is to have *Respect*. The AEI asserts responsibility to maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning at all levels. Students are expected to respect the rights of the AEI staff and other students. The AEI facilities and resources are for the use and benefit of students and faculty.

Bravery is to face a foe with integrity. The AEI will provide an appeal process for students. Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Honesty in facing a situation is to be brave. The AEI will provide students with the opportunity to inspect their academic records. However, any documents supplied to the AEI with the understanding that they be kept confidential will remain so. Students shall submit work that is their own and according to established assignment due dates.

Humility is to know yourself as a sacred part of Creation. The AEI will ensure classes begin and end according to class schedule. Students are required to arrive for class on time and remain for the duration of the scheduled class.

Truth is to know all these things. As part of the learning journey of our students, the AEI is committed to ensuring students receive services that respect student confidentiality.

Our Story

OVER TIME

1993

Anishinabek Grand Council, Chiefs in Assembly, directed the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI) Education Directorate to develop a model of an Anishinabek postsecondary institution.

1994

Anishinabek Grand Council, Chiefs in Assembly, directed that the Education Directorate formally establish the Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI) in accordance with the approved model. College partnerships begin.

1996

AEI formally takes over the distance delivery of the Native Community Care: Counselling and Development and the Native Early Childhood Education diploma programs.

1996 - 2000

Satellite campuses established on Fort William First Nation and Munsee-Delaware First Nation. Community-based programming in Curve Lake, Fort Albany, Garden River, Grassy Narrows, Kettle and Stoney Point, Pays Plat, Wasauksing, and Wikwemikong Unceded First Nations.

1998

AEI Munsee-Delaware Campus opened.

2001

First graduating cohorts:

1. Native Community Worker-Traditional Healing Methods (26 Graduates)
2. Binoojiingyag Kinoomaadwin; Early Childhood Education (15 Graduates)



2007

Held first Indigenous Paramedic Program with support and assistance from the Oneida Nation of the Thames (neighbouring community) with delivery to train and educate learners for new community based EMS Station with an enrolment of 13 learners and a graduating class of 9 learners.

2012

Held first Blended Social Service Worker-Indigenous Knowledge led program with an enrolment of eighteen (18) learners.

2019

AEI 25th Anniversary Celebration: Dinner, History, Recognition and Acknowledgements held at the Best Western Stoneridge Inn and Conference Centre located in London, ON.

2023 - 2024

Strategic Plan journey to envision the next years for AEI and program offerings.

2024

Celebrating
30
years!

OUR STRATEGIC JOURNEY

The CREATOR has given each one of us a combination of gifts, skills, and abilities that are unique to us alone. Our combination of gifts determines the roles that we will play throughout our lives. Every Anishinabek child has potential that will unfold through a lifetime of education and learning. Learning and education begins at birth, and it is through the guidance and support of family, friends, elders, community members and teachers that the child will learn to recognize, develop and act on their potential. Through the enactment of potential, the strength of the community is created, and the spirit of a Nation is born.



For all of this and more, we embarked on a **16-month journey** to bring many voices together to envision the next years of programming services in our communities.

ABEK ENJIKINOMAAGAASWOT



77

RESPONSES
from the
Community
and Students

BRINGING TOGETHER VOICES TO CRAFT A VISION

As part of our strategic planning process, we conducted two comprehensive surveys to gather invaluable insights that would guide the development of our strategic plan.

The first survey was administered to staff members from both our campuses and the head office. This survey focused on understanding the experiences, ideas, and feedback of our internal team, providing us with critical data on areas where we excel and where we can improve.

The second survey was directed towards the broader community we serve. It aimed to capture the perceptions, needs, and expectations of our community members, ensuring that their voices are integral to shaping our strategic directions.

The results from these surveys have been instrumental in helping us to refine our goals and initiatives, ensuring that they are aligned with the needs of both our staff and the community.

The feedback received is a cornerstone upon which we are building a robust and responsive strategic plan, aimed at enhancing our educational offerings and strengthening our community impact.

We are excited to share the findings from these surveys with you and to discuss how they have influenced the key priorities and strategies of our upcoming strategic plan. This collaborative approach is fundamental to our commitment to transparency and community-driven development.

KEY RESULTS

COMMUNITY / STUDENTS

Travel

I am willing to travel to school
(full-time, part-time or blended).



Programs & Services

I am satisfied with the
programs and services at AEI.



Traditions

I am satisfied with AEI's efforts in promoting
traditional knowledge and practices.



TOP 3 METHODS OF

Learning



TOP 3 FACTORS IMPACTING

Hiring



EMPLOYEES / STAFF

25

RESPONSES

from
Faculty
and Staff

Program Offerings

I believe the current programs offered
at AEI contribute to community needs.



Communication

I feel the communication on my
campus site is effective.



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2025 - 2030



DIVERSE LEARNING PATHS

Our centers are dedicated to providing a rich diversity of educational approaches, tailored to meet the unique needs of every adult learner. We believe each individual's path is their own unique journey to success. Our commitment to flexibility ensures that each person can find their own way to achieve their goals. In our educational approach, we deeply value the integration of ancestral languages and culture, fostering nurturing learning communities, and ensuring that student support and wellness are woven through the fabric of the educational experience. By offering a variety of educational opportunities, we are dedicated to accommodating the learning requirements of all individuals.



INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

In the pursuit of high-quality learning experiences, innovation in education is fundamental. We are committed to providing our students with innovative teaching and learning experiences that challenge the conventional and inspire new ways of thinking. Our educational centers are designed as incubators for progressive and forward-thinking ideas, where continuous development of teaching methods and services is our ongoing work. And above all, we are unwavering in our efforts to enhance our learning environments, ensuring that every space within our facilities is optimized to support the educational journey of all students.



ENHANCED PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are at the heart of our strategy to forge pathways for student success. By expanding our outreach and fostering collaborations, we actively address the specific needs within our communities. Through these alliances, we not only provide local opportunities but also tailor resources and support to enhance services and opportunities in our educational centers. Our evolving student services are a response to these local demands, ensuring that the fabric of our educational experience is both robust and responsive. Instrumental in all this are the partnerships that guarantee our students a broad spectrum of opportunities that nurture their development and pave the way for their achievements.



QUALITY SERVICE

We are deeply committed to serving our students and staff with excellence, guided by continuous development of strong governance and effective administrative practices. In our pursuit of excellence, we will focus on enhancing the equity of our service offerings, ensuring that each member of our community receives the attention and resources they need. We will continue to invest in our staff, constantly improving our human resources and staffing strategies to deliver consistent, quality services. Financial resilience is crucial to our operations, and we diligently work to secure funding that supports our goals and addresses our community's needs. Clear, effective communication is the cornerstone of our institute, keeping everyone in our community updated and engaged with our initiatives and progress across all our campuses.

OUR GOALS & OUTCOMES

2025 - 2030



DIVERSE LEARNING PATHS

Our ancestral languages and culture enhance each learning journey:

- Centers are inclusive and welcoming to a variety of Indigenous cultures
- Programming is consciously adapted to various cultures and languages
- Cultural workshops and Elders teachings are valued

Centers are supportive communities of learning:

- We work with the whole student—academically, culturally, spiritually
- Specialized spaces enhance the quality of student life

Educational offerings are varied to meet diverse learner needs:

- Expanded educational offerings provide many opportunities
- Trade programs and certifications open doors to employment

Student support and wellness are prioritized throughout their learning journey:

- Enhanced student wellness programming supports student success
- Lounges are expanded to create safe places to gather
- Sports and social engagement opportunities round out the education experience



INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Students have access to innovative teaching and learning experiences:

- Program delivery is flexible to meet varied needs

Centers provide opportunities that are progressive:

- Increase access to education with online programming
- IT services are accessible to ensure quality support
- Innovative learning tools and platforms are routinely integrated into the curriculum, ensuring that educational delivery stays at the forefront of digital trends

Continuous growth and development are prioritized:

- Staff are engaged in ongoing professional development programs to ensure students always get excellent help and support

Spaces and facilities are continually enhanced to provide optimal learning environments:

- Learning spaces are updated with current elements to foster an engaging and modern learning experience.
- Facilities evolve to meet the changing needs of students and educators
- Student residences are developed to welcome students from all over our territory
- Office spaces are centralized to improve efficiencies



ENHANCED PARTNERSHIPS

Outreach and collaboration are expanded as needs are identified:

- Holistic Community Well-being partners provide timely supports needed

Community partnerships provide local opportunities for students:

- Students gain practical experience and networking opportunities with local businesses and organizations
- The synergy between the centers and local partners results in joint initiatives that benefit both students and the community, fostering a spirit of mutual growth and support

Enhance educational engagement and community engagement:

- Increased employment opportunities provide opportunities close to home
- Centers become hubs of community activity, with local opportunities and resources driving innovation and learning excellence

Local resources and opportunities are planned to provide support to centers:

- Strategic collaborations with local partners result in increased support services for students and staff



QUALITY SERVICE

Enhanced governance and administrative practices ensure equitable services :

- Improved governance practices as the foundation for informed decision-making

Human resources and staffing are enhanced to ensure consistent services:

- Centers are fully staffed with skilled people, leading to reliable and high-quality services for all
- Staff well-being is looked after, making sure they're happy and ready to provide the best service

Finances are secured so that adequate funding is available to support identified needs:

- Financial planning is proactive and strategic, directly linking budget to the centers' priorities and needs
- The centers maintain financial health, enabling long-term stability and the ability to invest in key areas of development and growth

Communication practices evolve to enhance student and staff engagement:

- Our communication is clear and timely, making sure students and staff are always in the loop
- New ways of sharing information keep everyone connected and involved
 - Feedback from students and staff shapes how we talk with each other, making our conversations better

“

Our combination of gifts determines the roles that we will play throughout our lives. Every Anishinabek child has potential that will unfold through a lifetime of education and learning.

”





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EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

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