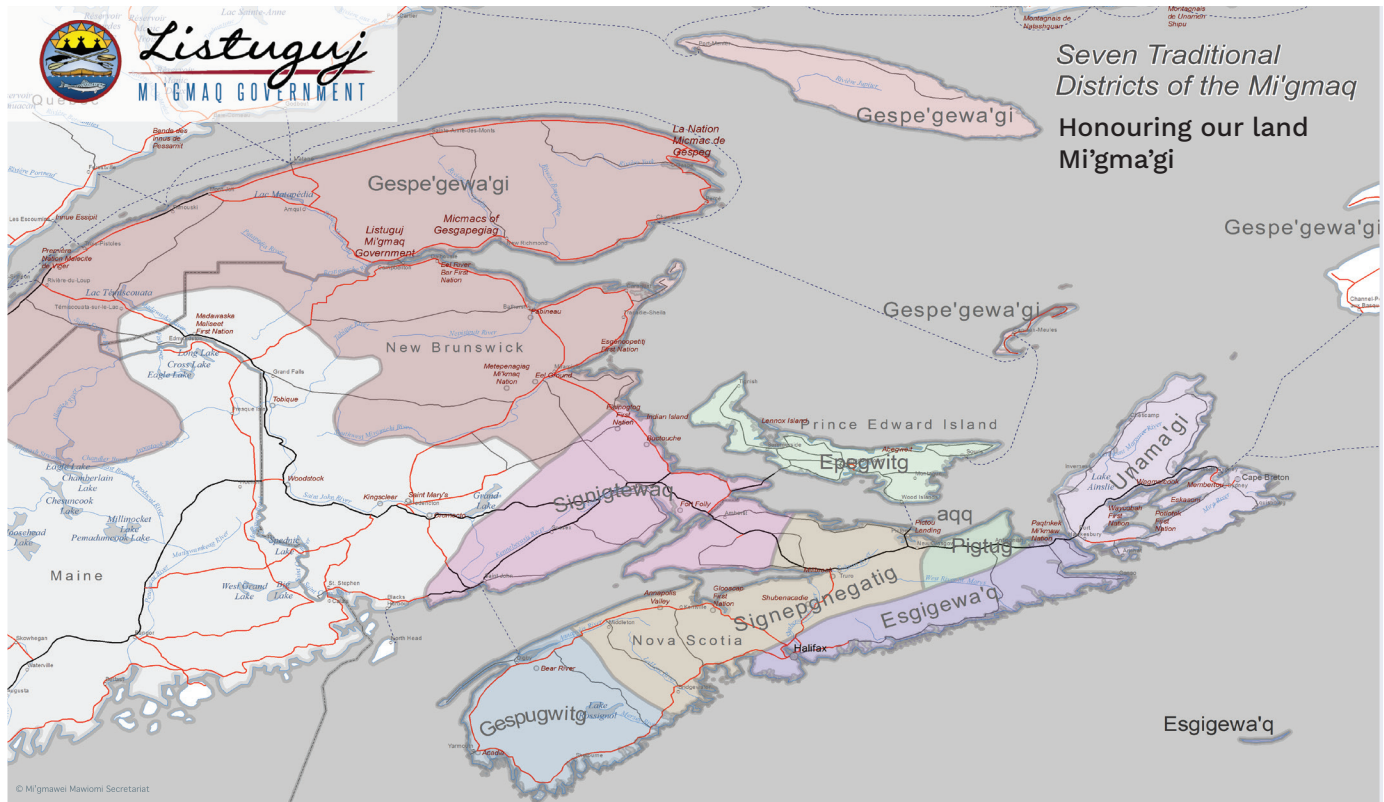


# Mi'gmaw Education Standards Living Standards

Listuguj Education, Training & Employment  
EDUCATION GOVERNANCE  
March 2023



Listuguj is in Gespe'gewa'gi, the seventh district of Mi'gma'gi. The territory of Gespe'gewa'gi extends from the present-day Gaspé Peninsula (in Quebec) to the Miramichi watershed area (in New Brunswick). Mi'gmaq have lived, used, and occupied the unceded lands, waters, and resources of Gespe'gewa'gi, Mi'gma'gi since time immemorial.



## 1.0) INTRODUCTION

The Listuguj Education, Training & Employment (LETE) manages and delivers educational programs and services primarily to Mi'gmaq learners. Ms't No'gmaq (All My Relations) is an important principle that guides education. Ms't No'gmaq speaks of creation and our connections with one another, land, and Mi'gmaq knowledge. LETE's vision statement informs this work:

*Siawinnui'sulti'gw, Siawimegitesulti'gw, Siawignu'tmasulti'gw*

We (ginu) continue to speak our language,  
we (ginu) continue to take pride in who we are,  
and we (ginu) continue to learn.<sup>1</sup>

The Mi'gmaw Education Standards support the well-being and success of Mi'gmaq learners along a holistic and lifelong learning pathway.<sup>2</sup> LETE Governance facilitated, co-created, and drafted the Mi'gmaq Education Standards with learners, educators, parents/guardians, and staff (Appendix A). The Mi'gmaw Education Standards are intended for all LETE programs and services. The purpose of having Mi'gmaw Education Standards (principles we uphold and are guided by) is to ensure that education programs and services are culturally relevant and meet the needs of Mi'gmaq learners. The Mi'gmaw Education Standards are intended to help guide the rebuilding and vitalizing of Listuguj's educational system in a manner that recognizes, supports, and rebuilds Mi'gmaw knowledges, ways of being, knowing and doing.

The Standards were approved by the Listuguj Mi'gmaq Development Council on April 29, 2022. LETE's Education Governance presented the Education Standards to the Listuguj Chief and Council at a "*Lunch and Learn*" on June 6, 2022.

- The Education Standards are framed by the Mi'gmaq Creation Story '*MESTIGISTAQANMINU*'. The Creation Story is used to help ground this work in Mi'gmaq ways of being and knowing.
- The standards include an Educators' Mantra. The Mantra is intended to encourage lifelong learning where teachers: *Facilitate, Accommodate, Collaborate, Communicate, and Motivate*.

The Mi'gmaq Education Standards project was conceptualized and implemented by LETE staff Tammy Barnaby, M.Ed. (Associate Director) and Amy Chamberlin, Ph.D. (Governance Policy Associate).

## 2.0) WHY THE MI'GMAW EDUCATION STANDARDS ARE REQUIRED

There is a need for Mi'gmaq Education Standards to ensure that education is rooted in Mi'gmaq ways of being and knowing: worldviews, values, knowledge, and language. This work sheds light on the ongoing impacts of colonial history and schooling. Indian Residential and Day Schools were used to assimilate and eliminate Indigenous peoples and knowledge.<sup>3</sup> The Mi'gmaq Education Standards project supports the broader work of reclaiming and rebuilding education for Mi'gmaq learners of Listuguj. Mi'gmaq of Listuguj (Gespe'gewa'gi) have inherent and Treaty Rights over their knowledge systems, Mi'gmaq language, ways of being, knowing, building, and sharing knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

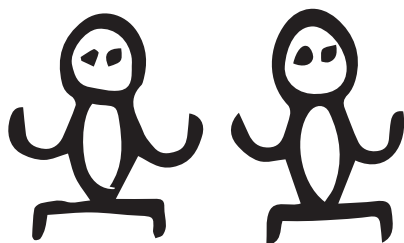
As one LETE staff observed, the Mi'gmaq Education Standards "honour" Mi'gmaq ways of living and being:

We need to honour the things passed down through the generations and use those as a base for where we need to go. You cannot build on colonial ways.

We were forced into those systems and have not thrived; we have survived. There needs to be acknowledgement. And we need to ask: *What is important to us, to our children? What has made us strong?* We need to go from where we are, from our worldview, from Mi'gma'gi, and what that means for us as Mi'gmaq.

The Mi'gmaq Education Standards are living: the standards will continue to change and evolve as part of living Mi'gmaq ways of knowing, being, building and sharing knowledge.

## 3.0) MI'GMAW STANDARDS – FRAMED BY MI'GMAW CREATION STORY



The Creation Story, "*Mestigisitaqanminu*", frames the Mi'gmaq Education Standards. Starting with the Creation Story is one way to center and honour Mi'gmaq Worldviews, values, protocols, language, ways of being and knowing. Sharing and building understandings about Mi'gmaq ways of being and knowing through practices, ceremonies, oral stories, and living practices was, and continues to be, valued within and amongst Mi'gmaq families, communities, and throughout Mi'gma'gi.

## MESTIGISTAQANMINU (Our Creation Story)

Story by Emma Metallic. Mi'gmaw translation, Joe Wilmot; copy edits, Diane Mitchell.

Telo'tmeg pemaqsultieg musigisg'tug, nisaqsultieg ugjit sama'tunen samqwan, altaieg ula ugs'tqamug giwtaw. 'Ms't tami eimu'tieg aq mu tami newtsiniw. Pema'lugutieg alugigtug, gaqtugwaw tetuep, gatu welo'tegeg'p. Nisia'tieg, aq ugs'tqamu mesnugsieg.

Glusgap na wejitasit na'gu'setigtug. Gisilwasoqotesgeg maqamigeg na Glusgap ugpugugip, ugtunip, ugpitnip, ulugunip aq ugwatip. Ap igtig wasoqotesg migute-lg'p maqamigew, aq Glusgap nemitegeg. Glusgap getu' ala'sip, na pipanima'tipnn na'gu'senitl mimajua'lan. Na tujiw, ap wasoqotesg'p, aq Glusgap gaqama'sip. Glusgap poqjiall'ga'p aq geitoqop ta'n telo'tegeg t'pgwan ugtmaqaqjigewe-img aq pesetoqop ugju'sn giwtaw. Glusgap tujiw weltesguapnn E'pinil. Wantaqpuguwinipnn gatu na'tuenn gisna natgoqwei algwilnnp.

*"Ni'n na Gugumij. Gaqpeigwa'si Mi'gma'gig ala'tuann a'tugwaqann aq gina'masuti'l,"* E'pit telimatl Glusgapal. Enqa'sip toqo siawewistoqop, *"Gatu, natgoqwei mu we'jitu. Me'suwe'ji'gig nigmaq."*

Glusgap wigumapnn apistanewjal, "Ignmuigg ne'po'lin ugjit Nugumij gulamen gisiapoqonmuatesnu we'jian wigmaq?"

*"E'e, tla'tega's,"* Apistane'wj asitematl.

Nugumij wesua'latl apistanewjal, temgwegetl, aq wi'gupaltipnig.

*"Tami gi'l wejien?"* Glusgap pipanimatl Nugumijal.

*"Guntewigtug wejiei,"* asitematl Nugumij. Glusgap angapt'g ugs'tqamu aq jigs'tu-atl Nugumijal. *"Gi's nige' pugwelipunqeg ala'tuann a'tugwaqann taqamoqwi'gas'gl 'ntinneg, wije 'st'ge' amalwi'gaqann,*

*sa'qawe'l aq pile'l, gigmmenaq ugtmiguite'taqannmual, esgmaqal agnutas'gtn aq nutas'gtn,"* teluet.

Glusgap angaptmuapnn Nugumijal ugpugugl aq nemiapnig napwi'gigng, 'st'ge' miguite'taqann, wejiaqal ula gigmmenaq 'ms't tami Mi'gma'gig. Glusgap aq Nugumij toqwiala'tipnig algina'masipnig Mi'gma'gig. Glusgap aq Nugumij nemia'tipnn Ji'nmul. Na weju'sg'p aq welima'q gigto'ogawi'tip. Ji'nm teliangamgusip uliatlasmin aq ta'n tujiw na'gu'set nisasa'siteg ugtinneg lpa alata'sip.

*"Wen na gi'l aq tami wejien?"* Glusgap pipanimatl.

*"Ni'n na 'gwe'ji'j uggwisl. Ni'n na Gulugs. Wejiei ta'n weljemajgewe'l etligweg jajigtug ala sipu."* teluet Ji'nm. Nulugs e'w'g ugtugwape'gn aq ugsi'l elu'gwet samqwanigtug ta'n wejiej musga'tu-atl Glusgapal aq 'gtigig. Nulugs pitoqsit aq jijuaqa asui'pugwet 'st'ge' 'msigu ugju'snigtug gisna ta'n tujiw wejgwapa'q.

Nulugs witpugu'tuapni Glusgapal aq Nugumijal aq agnutmuapni ta'n teloltinij wigmaq. *"Lame'g ugs'tqamug, lame'g ula maqamigeg ta'n gaqamulti'gw, we'jittesg eltaqte'gemgewei ugjip'sgei, 'ms't maw-taqane'was'g,"* Nulugs teluet. Naqa'sip, toqo nisa'lsip maqamigeg, we'tung'pnn weljemajgewe'l ugtluigneg. Nulugs siawewistoqop, *"Ta'n tujiw gigji'w eimn samqwan, samqwan ta'n me' gneg elpa'q aq gm'tginu, na ugjip'sgl tlwe'jittesg lame'g na maqamigeg, etlsaqaliaq 'mpisun ugjit gigmmenaq."* Nulugs gaqama'sip, elisgnuatg'p usapun aq a'sisegeg ugtlmaqang.

Nulugs elapa'sip samqwanigtug. *"Wela'lin,"* teluet, ugjit ta'n telmimajua'lin. Toqo pipanimatl plamu'l ugjit ignmatmnin ne'po'gsinin ugjit wi'gupaltimg. 'Ms't mawgopita'pnig, wi'gupaltultipnig plamu'l aq a'tugwa'tipnig ta'n telmialta'tij. Gaqwi'gupaltimgeg, Nulugs wije'wapnig

Glusgapal aq Nugumijal ta'n telmawialta'tij wigulti'tij ula Mi'gma'gig.

Na'gu'set sangew poqjigalqwasiep ugtejg gmtnigtug aq poqjitgiaqap aq pegniaqap. Glusgap, Nulugs aq Nugumij naqita'pnig aq eltu'tip pugtew. Na pugtew Glusgap eltoqop telwisig'p 'Gjipugtew. Gispmiaq 'lluigneg gesigl, 'lluigneg te's'gl pugte'jl wejaqs'g'pnn newtsiniw. Na pugte'jl eltu'tipnn 'lluigneg te'sinijig mimajultinijig aq elg igtigig 'lluigneg te'sijig mimajultijig wejiepnig. Ula mimajultijig mawita'pnig aq eltu'tipnn ugjigsu'l. Na ugjigsu'l tepgisita'qapnn aq gaqpeigwita'qapnn Mi'gma'gig aq gisite'tmi'tipnn na 'lluigneg mi'gmewe'gati'l. Glusgap gigj'pa'suatg'p pugtew ta'n tujiw E'pit gigja'siteg.

"Gewjin," teluet aq ge'gususgwa'latl Glusgapal.

"Wen ta na gi'l aq tami wejien?" pipanimatl Glusgap.

"Ni'n na 'Ggij. Aq wejiei nipi wejimnsing na miti's," teluet 'Ngij.

'Ngij me' maljewe'jt'p gatu eluapnn Nugumijal. Wije't'pnn ugugugual, gatu pilue't'pnn ugta'tugwaqannmual. Nugumij pema'toqopnn a'tugwaqann jilapaq-tas'g'pnn wejaqal pilue'l sa'se'wigisg'gl aq 'Ngij ala'toqopnn gina'muaqann ta'n gistlsaputawsitesg pilue'l sa'se'wigisg'gl. Na'gu'setaq aqawa'sitaq, aq Glusgap siawgnnapnn Uggwjl. "Gigmmenaq na 'ms't wejgwita'jig," 'Ngij gimtlimatl Glusgapal.

Ap, wi'gupaltultijig. Gatu nige' atuomgom-ing, 'pgumann aq malipqwanjl.

Giswi'gupaltulti'titeg, Gitpu pegising'p aq telimapnig na Glusgapal, Nugumijal, Nulugsal aq 'Ngijal amujpa maita'jig. Na'gu'set gi's gneg lame'g pisip gmtnigtug. Gitpu miguimapni "Apaja'sites nutaioq" Aq: "Siawamglej na pugtew." Gitpu ejiglaqsing'p. Tepgunset sangew aqua'sip aq etligasip ugtejg gmtnigtug. Glusgap

wej'pugua'sip maqamigegtug. Na pugte'j siawamgleg'p, elateg'p awti'jigtug gulamen gismajulgwataq.

Musigisg'tug na eimu'tieg. Nemitueg na ta'n nigmenaq teliguti'tij ula Mi'gma'gig: Unama'gig, Esgigewa'gig, S'gepne'gatig, Epegwitg aq Pigtug, Gespugwitg, Signigtewa'gig, aq Gespe'gewa'gig. Pemiilite'tmu'g ta'n telo'tmu'g aq ta'n telwigulti'gw ula gm'tginaq ge's pile'g wijigmgig pemsaputita'tij. Apatnisitaigw ula ugs'tqamug aq atlasmulti'gw ta'n wetagutulti'gw.

Ula na Mestigisitaqanminu





## MESTIGISTAQANMINU

### (Our Creation Story)

Story by Emma Metallic. Mi'gma'w translation, Joe Wilmot and copy edits, Diane Mitchell.

We felt ourselves soaring through the sky, coming down to feel the waters, travelling the earth around us. We were everywhere but nowhere at once. We're floating through the clouds, the thunder is loud, but comforting. We're falling, and the earth catches us.

Glusgap was made from na'gu'set. After the lightning bolt struck the ground Glusgap had eyes, a mouth, hands, legs, and feet. Another bolt struck the ground, and Glusgap could see. Glusgap wanted to move around, so they asked na'gu'set to give them life. Then, another bolt, and Glusgap got up. Glusgap started to walk around and could feel the earth between their toes and smell the air around them. Glusgap stumbled upon E'pit. She had a calm stance but seemed to be looking for someone or something.

*"Ni'n na Gugumij. I have travelled across Mi'gma'gi carrying stories and teachings,"* E'pit said to Glusgap. She paused then continued, *"But, I am missing something. I'm missing some of my relatives."*

Glusgap called upon apistanewjl, *"Would you give up your life for Nugumij so that we can help her find her relatives?"*

*"Yes, I will,"* Apistanewj replied.

Nugumij took the apistanewj, cracked its neck, and they feasted.

*"Where did you come from?"* Glusgap asked Nugumij.

*"I came from a rock,"* Nugumij replied.

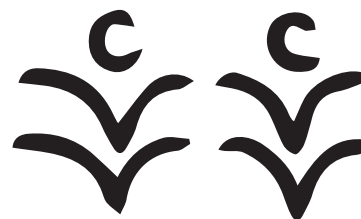
Glusgap looked at ugs'tqamu and listened to Nugumij. *"For many seasons I have carried stories etched across me, almost like drawings, old and new, memories of our relatives, waiting to be told and listened to,"* she said.

Glusgap looked inN ugumij's eyes and saw images, like memories, belonging to relations across Mi'gma'gi. Glusgap and Nugumij travelled together learning on Mi'gma'gi. In their travels, Glusgap and Nugumij saw Ji'nm. The wind blew, and a sweet smell surrounded them. Ji'nm looked well-rested, and when the sun shone down on him, he shined.

*"Who are you, and where did you come from?"* Glusgap asked.

*"I am your sister's son. Ni'n na Ulugsl. I came from the sweetgrass that grows nearby that river,"* Ji'nm said. Nulugsl tilted his chin and lips towards the open waters showing Glusgap and the others the direction he came from. Nulugsl stood tall, and every now and then he swayed, like grass in the wind or the tide coming in.

Nulugsl stood with Glusgap and Nugumij and told stories about his relations. *"Below the earth, below the ground on which we stand, you will find a web of roots, all interconnected with one another,"* Nulugsl said. He paused, and lowered himself to the ground, feeling the sweetgrass between his fingers. Nulugsl continued, *"Whenever you are close to water, water that reaches far out beyond our territory, you will find these roots sprawled beneath the ground, sprouting medicine for our relatives."* Nulugsl stood up, tied his hair into a braid, and flung it behind his shoulder.



Water

Nulugsl faced the water. *“Wela’lin,”* he said to the waters for giving him life. He called upon a plamu to sacrifice its life for a wonderful feast. Everyone sat together; they feasted on the salmon and told more stories about their travels. After the feast, Nulugsl joined Glusgap and Nugumij on their shared journey living on and with Mi’gma’gi.

The sun began to creep away from view and hid behind the mountains bringing coldness and the night sky. Glusgap, Nulugsl and Nugumij stopped travelling and started a pugtew. The pugtew that Glusgap made was called the Grand-Fire. After seven winters, seven sparks flew out at the same time. The sparks created seven beings, followed by another seven beings. These beings came together and formed families. The families split out and moved across Mi’gma’gi forming our seven districts. Glusgap sat close to the pugtew when an E’pit moved beside them.

*“You look cold,”* she said and wrapped her arms around Glusgap.

*“Who are you and where did you come from?”* Glusgap asked.

*“Ni’n na ‘Ggij. And I came from a leaf that fell from the tree,”* said ‘Ngij.

‘Ngij was younger but still, she resembled Nugumij. They had the same eyes, but they held different stories. Nugumij carried stories etched across her from different seasons, and Ngij carried teachings about how to live through those different seasons. The sun hid from view, and Glusgap held onto ‘Ngij. *“Our relatives are all coming together,”* ‘Ngij whispered to Glusgap.

Again, they feasted – this time with strawberries, blueberries, and hazelnuts.

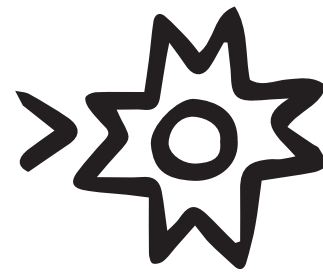
After the feast, Gitpu arrived and said to them that Glusgap, Nugumij, Nulugsl, and ‘Ngij had to leave. The sun went deep inside the mountains. Gitpu reminded them, *“I will return if needed.”* And: *“Always keep the fire going.”* Gitpu flew away. The moon crept away and hid behind the mountains. In the morning, the sun rose, and the tide came in. Glusgap stood up from the ground. The spark continued to burn, lighting a path for them to follow.

We are in the sky. We can see how our relatives have grown across Mi’gma’gi: Unama’gi, Esgigewa’gi, S’gepne’gati, Epegwitg aq Pigtug, Gespugwitg, Signigtewa’gi, aq Gespe’gewa’gi.

We are navigating how to live on and with our territory as new relatives pass through. We come back down to the earth and rest within our web of relations.

This is our Creation Story.

Ula na Mestagisitaqminu.



sun

## Mestigisitaqanminu

Story by Emma Metallic. French translation, Carole Arsenault; copy edits, Hilary Barnaby.

Nous nous sommes sentis planer dans le ciel, descendre pour sentir les eaux, parcourir la terre autour de nous. Nous étions partout et nulle part en même temps. Nous flottons dans les nuages, le tonnerre est fort mais réconfortant. On tombe et la terre nous rattrape.



lightning

Glusgap a été fait à partir de na'gu'set. Après que l'éclair eut frappé le sol, Glusgap avait des yeux, une bouche, des mains, des jambes et des pieds. Un deuxième éclair eut frappé le sol, et Glusgap pouvait voir. Après cela, Glusgap a voulu se déplacer. Alors, Glusgap a demandé à na'gu'set d'el-lui donner une vie. Ensuite, un autre éclair a frappé, et Glusgap s'est levé. Glusgap a commencé à se promener et pouvait sentir la terre entre ces orteils et l'air autour d'ellui. Glusgap est tombé sur E'pit. Elle était calme, mais elle semblait de chercher quelqu'un ou quelque chose.

E'pit a dit à Glusgap : « *Ni'n na Gugumij. J'ai voyagé partout au Mi'gma'gi avec des histoires et des enseignements.* » Elle s'arrêta pour un moment et continue : « *Mais, il me manque quelque chose. Certains de mes proches me manquent.* »

Glusgap a fait appel à apistanewj et lui dit : « *Voudriez-vous donner ta vie pour qu'on puisse trouver les proches de Nugumij ?* »

Apistanewj a répondu : « *Oui, je le ferai.* »

Nugumij prit apistanewj et lui tordit le cou. Glusgap et Nugumij mangèrent un festin.

Glusgap a demandé à Nugumij : « *D'où venez-vous ?* »

Nugumij a répondu : « *Je viens d'une roche.* » Glusgap a regardé ugs'tqamu et a écouté Nugumij. « *Pendant plusieurs saisons, je portais ces vieilles et nouvelles histoires gravées sur mon corps, un peu comme des dessins, les mémoires de nos proches, en attente d'être racontées et entendues* », dit-elle.

Glusgap a regardé Nugumij dans les yeux et a vu des images, comme des mémoires, appartenant à leurs proches de partout au Mi'gma'gi. Ils se sont lancés dans un voyage ensemble en explorant le Mi'gma'gi. Au cours de leurs voyages, Glusgap et Nugumij ont rencontré Ji'nm. Le vent fit souffler une odeur douce à l'entour d'eux. Ji'nm semblait reposé et lorsque les rayons du soleil le touchèrent, il brillait.

Glusgap a demandé : « *Qui êtes-vous et d'où venez-vous ?* »

Ji'nm réponds : « *Je suis le fils de ta sœur. Je suis Ulugsl. Je suis venu du foin d'odeur près de la rivière.* » Nulugsl a penché son menton et ses lèvres vers les eaux libres en montrant Glusgap et les autres d'où il est venu. Nulugsl se tenait la tête haute et de temps en temps il oscillait, comme l'herbe dans le vent ou la marée montante.

Nulugsl s'est tenu avec Glusgap et Nugumij et a raconté des histoires sur ses relations. « *Sous la terre, sous le sol sur lequel nous nous tenons, vous trouverez un réseau de racines, toutes interconnectées les unes avec les autres,* » dit Nulugsl. Il s'arrêta, et s'abaissa au sol, en ressentant le foin d'odeur entre ses doigts. « *Chaque fois que vous êtes près de l'eau, de l'eau qui s'étend bien au-delà de notre territoire, vous trouverez ces racines étalées sous le sol, faisant pousser des plantes médicinales pour nos proches,* » a-t-il poursuivi. Il s'est levé, a tressé ses cheveux et les a jetés derrière son épaule.



Nulugsl s'est tourné vers l'eau. Il dit : « *Wela'lin* » aux eaux qui lui ont donné la vie. Nulugsl a appelé un plamu pour sacrifier sa vie et être mangé lors d'un festin. Tout le monde s'est assis ensemble pour un festin de plamu et s'est raconté des histoires sur leurs voyages. Après le festin, Nulugsl a rejoint Glusgap et Nugumij dans leur voyage sur le territoire de Mi'gma'gi.

Le soleil a commencé à s'éloigner de la vue et s'est caché derrière les montagnes, apportant le froid et le ciel nocturne. Glusgap, Nulugsl et Nugumij ont cessé de voyager et ont commencé un pugtew. Le pugtew fabriqué par Glusgap s'appelait le grand-feu. Après sept hivers, sept étincelles se sont envolées en même temps. Ces étincelles ont créé sept humains suivis de sept autres humains. Ces personnes se sont réunies et ont formé des familles. Les familles se sont séparées et ont déménagé à travers le Mi'gma'gi pour former nos sept districts.

Glusgap était assis près du pugtew lorsqu'une e'pit vint et dit :

« *Vous avez l'air d'avoir froid* ». Elle enroula ses bras autour d'ellui.

Glusgap a dit : « *Qui êtes-vous et d'où venez-vous ?* » « *Ni'n na 'Ugij et je suis venue d'une feuille qui est tombée de l'arbre,* » répondit la mère de Glusgap.

'Ngij était plus jeune, mais elle ressemblait quand même à Nugumij. Elles avaient les mêmes yeux, mais ils racontaient des histoires différentes. Nugumij portait des histoires gravées sur son corps des différentes saisons, et 'Ngij possédait des enseignements sur la façon de vivre à travers ces différentes saisons. Le soleil s'est caché, et Glusgap s'est accroché à 'Ngij. 'Ngij a chuchoté à Glusgap, « *Toutes nos relations se réunissent.* »

Ils ont tous mangé un festin de fraises, bleuets et noisettes. Après le festin, Gitpu est passé et leur a dit que Glusgap, Nugumij, Nulugsl et 'Ngij devaient partir. Le soleil s'est couché dans les montagnes. Gitpu leur a également rappelé : « *Je reviendrais si nécessaire,* » et « *Laissez toujours brûler le feu* ». Gitpu s'est envolé. La lune s'est éloignée et s'est cachée derrière les montagnes.

Le lendemain, le soleil s'est levé et la marée a monté. Glusgap s'est levé du sol. L'étincelle a continué à brûler, éclairant un chemin qu'ils devaient suivre.

Nous sommes dans le ciel. Nous pouvons voir comment nos proches ont grandi à travers Mi'gma'gi : Unama'gi, Esge'gewa'gi, S'gepne'gati, Epegwitg aq Pigtu, Gespugwitg, Signigtewa'gi, aq Gespe'gewa'gi. Nous tentons de déterminer comment vivre sur et avec notre territoire alors que de nouveaux proches arrivent. Nous redescendons sur terre et nous nous reposons au sein de notre réseau de relations.

Ceci est notre histoire de création.

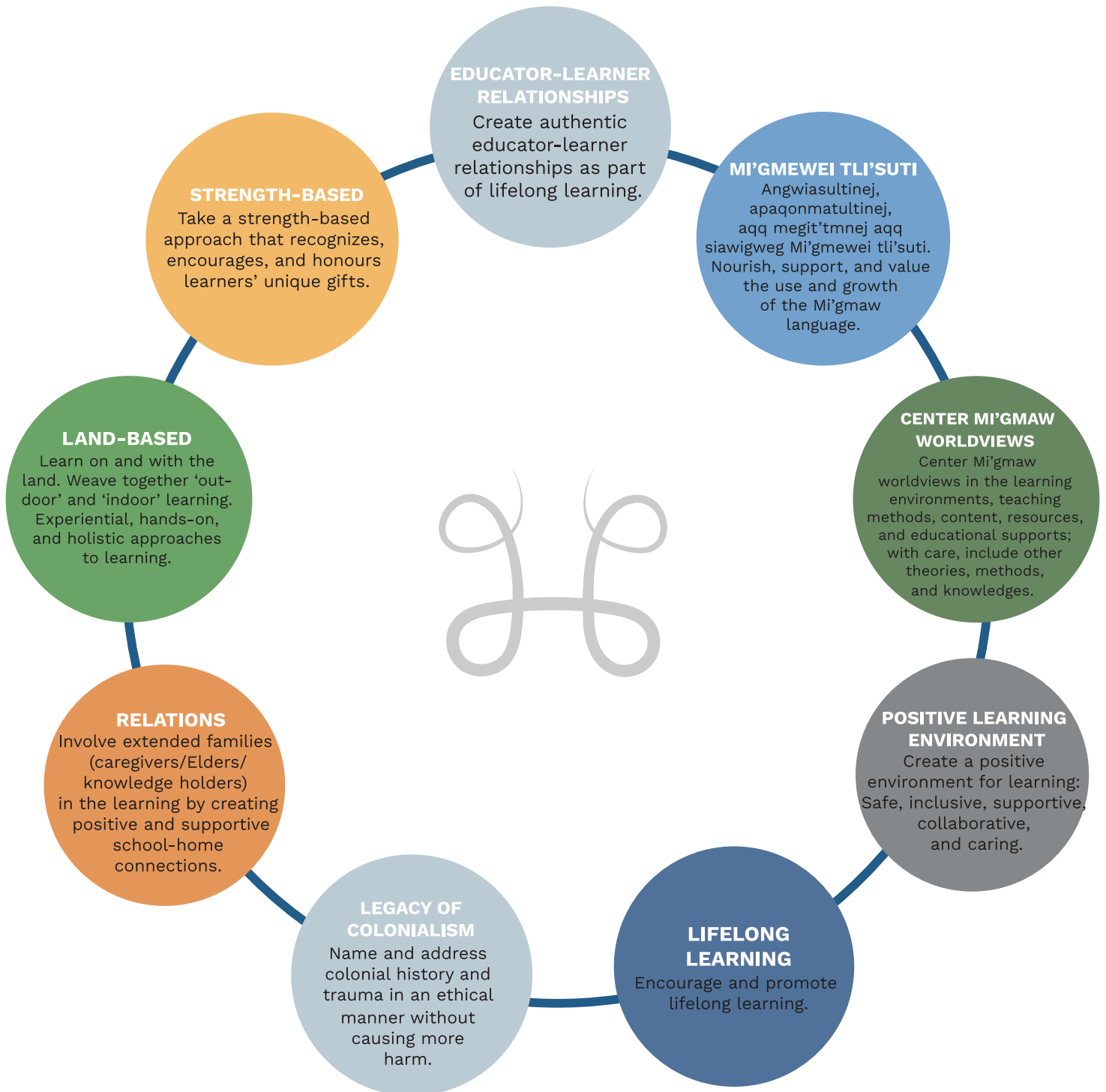
Ula na Mestagisitaqminu.



mountains

# Mi'gmaw Education Standards

## Living Standards



## 4.0) MI'GMAW EDUCATION STANDARDS

### EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS

Create authentic educator-learner relationships as part of lifelong learning.

- Get to know the students outside of school. Build those relationships with them: go to their dance show and show an interest in who they are.
- Humour, have fun, do not take things too seriously! Practice humility.
- Create safe and positive learning spaces.
- Build authentic relationships that are holistic (Mind/Body/Spirit/Emotion).
- See the strength in students: build resilience first, care for them, and connect with their spirit.
- Make student identity and belonging part of the learning. Empower students by enabling them to take ownership over their learning (passion projects, options, connecting with their interests).

### STRENGTH-BASED

Take a strength-based approach that recognizes, encourages, and honours learners' unique gifts.

- Provide the students opportunities to experience success, to build confidence, to try things they may struggle with; show them how to use their strengths.
- Choice/options/autonomy over learning.
- Offer options for assessments: "Show me" (the skill/knowledge/practice) in the way you feel most comfortable.
- Recognize diverse ways of learning.
- Give learners responsibilities.

### MI'GMEWEI TLI'SUTI

Angwiasultinej, apaqonmatultinej, aq megit'tmnej aq siawigweg Mi'gmewei tli'suti. Nourish, support, and value the use and growth of the Mi'gmaw language.

- Mi'gmewei tli'suti – the language strengthens identity, sense of pride, and deep history.
- Work on speaking, hearing, and understanding first, reading and writing comes later.
- Encourage, foster, and practice collaboration amongst educators (share knowledge, resources, and skills)
- Create opportunities for learners (clients/students) to see/hear/feel Mi'gmaw language in their daily interactions (e.g., Word of the day, posters, use of everyday and frequently used words in Mi'gmaw).
- Experiential learning is an integral part of language acquisition. Learners need to hear a word spoken many times, in many separate locations, for long-term retention.

## LAND-BASED

Learn on and with the land. Weave together outdoor and indoor learning. Experiential, hands-on, and holistic approaches to learning.

- LOVE! Land-based learning brings life back into the learner and gets them excited about school. Not liking school is a learned behaviour/attitude that we must combat.
- Create connection to the land by using the language for the environment around them (experiential learning).
- Place-based learning involves extended families and community organizations, local history, and Mi'gmaq practices.

## CENTER MI'GMAW WORLDVIEWS

in the learning environments, teaching methods, content, resources, and educational supports; with care, include other theories, methods, and knowledges.<sup>2</sup>

- Ms't No'gmaq. We are a collective; we all work together.
- We must ensure that educational services and programs (delivered by the community or collaboratively with a province) come from a worldview that is Mi'gmaq; carefully include other theories and knowledges (e.g. Western knowledge).
- With care, intentionally and ethically work within and across knowledge systems.
- Acknowledge and work to counter the impacts of colonialism and the painful legacy of the omission, denial, and denigration of Indigenous knowledge systems in the building of settler Canada.
- Continue to strengthen Mi'gmaw (Indigenous) worldviews and concerns, as Indigenous Peoples and as non-Indigenous allies.

## RELATIONS

Involve extended families (caregivers/Elders/knowledge holders) in the learning by creating positive and supportive school-home connections.

- The connection between youth and Elders is so essential. Let us reconnect our kids [students/learners/clients] with Elders, knowledge holders, language speakers, and organizations in the community of Listuguj as part of learning.
- Create a relationship with learners' family/community outside of school (positive support system)
- Make positive contact with caregivers, extended family, and the community.
- Build those connections [with families, organizations, community]. It can be difficult, and you do not always get it, but keep trying no matter how hard it is.

## POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Create a positive environment for learning:

Safe, inclusive, supportive, collaborative, and caring.

- Try to make the space (in the classroom) as comfortable as possible for learning.
- It is essential to ‘*wrap students*’ (learners/clients) with positive experiences: hopefully, the positive experiences will outweigh the negative experiences that they encounter.
- Educators can build relationships by modelling and showing students how to communicate with one another in a healthy way.

## LEGACY OF COLONIALISM

Name and address colonial history and trauma ethically without causing more harm.

- Educators must be aware of our past and what we carry forward: as Indigenous Peoples, as Settler Peoples.
- As an institution/educator, we must have an honest conversation about the connection between trauma and education. We also need to understand what the truth means. [Indigenous peoples] are survivors of those places [residential and day schools], which had a history of violence and abuses. That trauma still exists. We need to discuss to understand the ongoing impacts of colonialism.
- Learn about and implement trauma-informed teaching practices from an Indigenous lens.
- Build awareness and understanding about concepts and words used to name ‘trauma’: Colonial Trauma, Historical Trauma, Soul Wound, etc.
- Build awareness and understanding about the lasting harms of colonialism and actively create safe and inclusive spaces for ‘healing’ and transformation.
- Take proactive and informed approaches to lateral violence; adopt practices that contribute to positive and empathetic learning environments.
- Colonial trauma includes but is not limited to institutionalized racism and biases, ongoing colonialism, and ignoring or dismissing Indigenous knowledge in education systems.
- Promote and encourage wellness and cultural safety when addressing colonial trauma.

## LIFELONG LEARNING

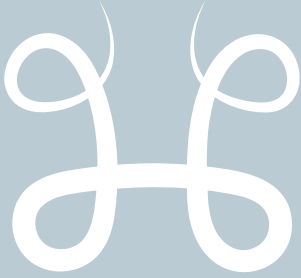
Encourage and promote lifelong learning.

- Engage in professional development opportunities (training, workshops, sessions) to stay informed, and collaborate.
- Share ideas about “better practices” to best meet learners’ evolving and changing needs in all aspects of education and training (i.e., Resources, Curriculum, Teaching Methods, and Learning Environment).
- Keep learning how to learn.



# LETE Educators' Mantra

LETE's Educators' Mantra is a reminder of the skill and art involved in creating a supportive, comfortable, and nurturing environment for learning. It is crucial to pay attention to the 'how' – ways of sharing, doing, and building – knowledge.



## Facilitate

Educators are facilitators of learning and knowledge building versus being 'experts' at the front of the room. Build upon a student(s)/ client(s) prior knowledge (What do they already know? What lived experiences do they have?) Guide a learner towards resources (e.g., Elders, community members, online sources, print documents, and organizations).

## ➤ Accommodate

Every learner has gifts and unique ways of seeing, hearing, and moving. Every learner has needs. Accommodating means understanding a learner's gifts and their needs and then establishing and fostering a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment. Accommodate does not mean 'watering down' or expecting less. Rather, accommodate means meeting learners/ clients where they are socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually and expecting them to thrive.

## ➤ Collaborate

Indigenous ways of being and knowing emphasize collective approaches and collaboration. Team building amongst staff and with students will create a stronger, healthier education system. Collaboration can foster different points of view and build empathy. Educators are encouraged to reach out to family members, knowledge holders, language keepers, and community organizations.

## ➤ Communicate

Communication consists of verbal and non-verbal interactions between educators, and students. Verbal messages are what you say, and nonverbal messages are how you say them (tone, body language). A supportive climate has few distortions (sound, physical barriers, lighting). Model active listening skills (asking for feedback, summarizing, and clarifying). Precise delivery involves : knowing your students, adapting to their needs, anticipating misconceptions. These practices communicate respect for learners, foster belonging, and let learners know they are valued.<sup>1</sup>

## ➤ Motivate

Recognize each student's unique gifts, abilities, strengths, passions, and foundations (talents and skills). Practice critical reflective thinking: openly reflect on new information, ask questions, and show curiosity as part of lifelong intellectual humility and generosity where educators and learners build relationships and learn together.<sup>2</sup>

1 Cheri Simonds and Pamela Cooper, *Communication for the Classroom Teacher*. 9th Ed. (IL, Pearson, 2011), 8-12.

2 Ozlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo, *Is Everyone Really Equal?* 2nd Ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017).

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A – About the Mi'gmaw Education Standards project Background**

From October 2021 to March 2022, LETE facilitated semi-formal focus group sessions with education and training staff to discuss and document Mi'gmaw standards for education. Prior, in May 2020, LETE Governance also conducted an academic literature review on Indigenous education standards and assessments. The literature review identified core themes from the academic literature (national and international):

- Students are central;
- Strengths'-based approach;
- learning is holistic;
- learning is lifelong;
- culturally responsive pedagogy;
- cultural competence and safety;
- decolonizing practices;
- Indigenous languages revitalizations;
- family-based knowledge transfer;
- land-based knowledge transfer;
- Weave/bring knowledge (Indigenous and Western) together.

The literature review included a section on Mi'gmaq-based strategies to decolonize education identified by Listuguj-McGill students (Report 2018). The decolonization strategies identified by the Listuguj-McGill students include:

- Incorporate Indigenous/Mi'gmaw knowledge in all aspects of the curriculum
- Encourage relations with the land, one another, animals, plants and all beings.
- Train educators to deliver Mi'gmaw-based education (as part of cultural safety)
- Train educators about colonialism as part of cultural sensitivity (e.g., legacy and ongoing impacts of colonialism, racism, and discrimination)
- Use plain language to describe concepts, and practices as part of Indigenizing (“teachers may not want to ‘Indigenize’ but they will be willing to go out on the land!”)
- Connect with the community: bring resources and people into or out of the classroom. Start with the local and move out.
- Pay attention not only to ‘what’ but also ‘how’ we are teaching (Mi'gmaw methods).

## Research Design

LETE used a relational methodology (i.e., methods included a series of semi-formal conversations, sharing of information)<sup>5</sup> to build the Mi'gmaq Education Standards. This approach was used because of its flexibility and potential to build knowledge together with staff, learners, and community members respectfully and ethically. LETE shared information from the academic literature over the course of several months as part of these facilitated conversations. LETE heard from educators, students, parents/guardians about how they envision community-based schooling (what they like, concerns). The governance team developed and implemented several perception surveys with community members of Listuguj: LETE staff, high school students, and parents/guardians. LETE Governance held a series of facilitated sessions focusing on educational standards with LETE staff, particularly educators. The Mi'gmaq Education Standards are based on this cumulative work – literature review, surveys, and facilitated sessions.

## Summary of research

- LETE conducted an academic literature review, indigenous education standards and assessments (May 2020)
- LETE conducted surveys with students, staff, and community members, 2020-2021.
  - Reflections about the Listuguj-McGill Bachelor of Education Program (August 2021)
  - AGS Staff Perceptions About Education Standards (October 2021)
  - Hearing from Enhancement Staff (February 2021)
  - Hearing from parents of high school students (March 2021)
  - Hearing from high school students (February 2021)
- Survey all students at Alaqsite'w Gitpu School Students to find out students' interests and desires for schooling. LETE asked AGS students "What I like best about AGS". Used appreciative inquiry approach to identify what is working well and areas to strengthen. (March 2021).
- Held meetings with LETE managers (share information and receive feedback) (June 2021)
- Delivered presentations about the Standards to staff (Professional Development Day) (August 2021)
- Facilitated sessions with education staff\* (October to March 2022)
- Produced communication pieces throughout to communicate findings.

## Facilitated sessions with education staff

LETE facilitated ten (10) sessions with LETE staff (AGS educators, Education Assistants, Administrators, and staff who work with adults and youth). An estimated ninety (90) LETE staff participated in at least one (1) session about the Mi'gmaq Education Standards.

From October 2021 to March 2022, LETE Governance held sessions with LETE staff and AGS educators (primary/elementary, middle school, and Mi'gmaq immersion). Sessions were typically one to two hours long. Sessions with LETE educators took place at the Alaqsitew Gitpu School. Facilitators provided refreshments at the in-person sessions. Some sessions opened with smudging and a brief check-in; others opened with a short video related to the topic area, followed by a facilitated discussion. Two of the ten sessions took place over ZOOM (due to restrictions because of COVID). AGS Immersion Educators Joyce Germain and Brenda Germain facilitated the land and Mi'gmaq language sessions. Tammy Barnaby, LETE Associate Director and Amy Chamberlin, Policy Associate, facilitated all other sessions. Some sessions had predetermined topics, while others had open semi-structured areas for discussion. Facilitators took notes at all sessions, which were shared with participants. Participants could provide additional feedback on an anonymous online survey after each session.

At the sessions, LETE staff emphasized the importance of working inclusively. As stated by one participant: *“We need to be guided by the community, parents, get their feedback and approval first. Need a community aspect to education.”* Educators highlighted the importance of having leadership support in this process, along with community involvement: *“Leadership needs to be involved in advocating for standards, and the guidance and acceptance come from the community.”* Some educators spoke about the principles underpinning Mi'gmaq Education Standards – *respect, support, care, and collectivity*. If there is to be a shift in education, *“we need to bring each other up, learn together,”* as expressed by one educator. Educators emphasized what works well in the current education system, what needs to be changed, and why. LETE educators and administrators asked critical questions: *How will the standards be rolled out? How will LETE have checks and balances for these standards? How will LETE measure the effectiveness of the strategy? How will LETE ensure buy-in to the importance of transforming the curriculum?* Finally, in diverse ways, educators spoke about the importance of keeping learners (and clients) at the center and building a system where students feel “respected, supported, and loved”:

*It is important that students feel respected, supported, and loved: these are foundational to learning and supporting learners to reach their full potential. Staff play many roles: parent, mother, auntie, educators, counsellor*  
(LETE staff, meeting with administrators June 2021).

## End-Notes

<sup>1</sup> LETE developed its Vision statement in December of 2017 from a 'think tank' session with Language Speakers from Listuguj (See: LETE Governance Plan, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Holistic education recognizes the "interrelationships of all living things." An Indigenous holistic education means that "one's own Indigenous culture" is centred in the curriculum and "all aspects of teaching and learning." White, Louellyn. Free to be Mohawk: Indigenous Education at the Akwesasne Freedom School, (University of Oklahoma Press, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Inherent Right to education: First Nations rights over education "flows from their inherent, Aboriginal rights. These are sui generis rights, collectively owned by the Aboriginal communities. They are not transferable (Report on priority actions in view of improving First Nations education by FNEC, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) (2012), 83); First Nations Education Council (FNEC), Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), assert that Indigenous Peoples' rights for an education system are "based on their customs, traditions, laws, and norms, which they transmit to future generations" (Ibid, 64); Education is an Inherent right that has Constitutional protection but that is not their source. Aboriginal Rights arise from prior occupation of the land by Aboriginal peoples. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, affirms, but is not the source of, inherent rights (Ibid, 65); With respect to pre-confederation treaties, the FNEC et. al., asserts that: "The right to exercise of customs, religions, and traditional activities necessarily implies the right to cultural transmission, a right to education (Ibid, 75).

See also: 1972, 2010: Indian Control over Indian Education, 1972 (National Indian Brotherhood), Emphasizes parental responsibility and local control in the areas of responsibility, programs, teachers, and facilities. Affirms First Nations' Inherent and Aboriginal Treaty rights to education. Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Control of First Nations Education – It's Our Vision, It's Our Time (July 2010) (Updated version of the 1972 policy statement). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007 (Canada signed on in May of 2016): Indigenous Peoples rights to practice and revitalize cultural traditions (Article 11); spiritual and religious traditions and ceremonies (Article 12); knowledge systems (Article 13); control over educational institutions (Article 14); dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations ... reflected in education and public information. States, in consultation with Indigenous peoples, shall "combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination" and promote tolerance and understanding (Article 15).

<sup>5</sup>Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro, Applying Indigenous Research Methods – Storying with Peoples and Communities, (New York: Routledge, 2019).

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