

LIFE LONG LEARNING TASK FORCE

Language & Culture Centre Vision & Five-Year Plan

March 31, 2019

Onkwakara Communications & Consulting Inc.

Life Long Learning Task Force

FINAL REPORT

Contract January to March 2019

INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

At Six Nations there has been a second language program in Mohawk and Cayuga for more than 40 years. In Summer 1983 there was an opportunity to work with the Haudenosaunee second language teachers to help them to refine and re-develop their second language programs. During those meetings with the language teachers there was some discussion surrounding the fact that the students were not using the language to communicate, in fact, they were not using the language at all, which caused great distress among those first-language speaking teachers.

It was around that time that immersion programs were beginning in Ontario for French language and our Haudenosaunee language teachers were very interested in how immersion worked and how well the student actually used their target language. With those questions in mind we began collecting information on how immersion in French was being taught and how well the students were communicating in the language.

From those conversations a group of parents were brought together to discuss the possibility of an immersion program for Six Nations in both Mohawk and Cayuga. The parents who attended these meetings took steps to start an immersion program that very September. One immersion program was offered in Mohawk and another was offered in Cayuga, while the second language programs continued in the English-speaking elementary schools of the community.

In the discussions with parents and language teachers it became apparent that without the language we would lose our culture and our identity and we would no longer be Haudenosaunee people and we would become just like everybody else in the province and that idea was unacceptable to virtually everyone in the community.

Immersion in the early stages was taught by first language Mohawk and Cayuga speakers. As these teachers aged it became clear in both the immersion program and the second language program that we were really needing teachers but there was no one was sufficiently fluent to follow the early first-language immersion and second language teachers. It then became clear that we had to train people to be speakers and that was the beginning of the adult immersion. It started with the Mohawk program for adult immersion where young people, some of whom were already teachers, who took the adult immersion program for one year, and perhaps two and were then able to teach in the second language programs or in the immersion programs in the community. This worked for a while but then it became clear that more teachers were needed and teachers who were second-language learners in Mohawk and Cayuga needed more training to become more fluent especially for the immersion programs. Following the beginnings of the Mohawk immersion program for adults, the Cayuga people came forward and started their own immersion program for adults and lately the Onondaga people have come together to develop an Onondaga immersion program for adults.

Today it is a generally accepted fact that we must ensure the revitalization of our languages and maintain our culture and identity that is brought to us through the language. And that is why we go forward today

with culture and language being the central understandings for all education at Six Nations of the Grand River.

METHODOLOGY

Under this contract the consultants were directed to conduct broad and focused engagement within the community including

- a) regular classroom teachers
- b) education support staff, and
- c) Council
- d) Council staff

to obtain input for making recommendations to the final report. As such the consultants provided surveys to the Elementary and Secondary immersion programs, the elementary English education staff, elementary second-language staff, Council staff, and District Councilors.

Given that the people to whom the survey was directed have been inundated by surveys and interviews in the last while, it was felt that it would be important to provide a survey that was very short but to the point so the persons surveyed would not be overwhelmed.

While the return of the surveys was not as fulsome as we had hoped, we do have a sufficient number of surveys that provide good information.

Most of the findings come from the surveys while some of the findings come from our own experiences with our Haudenosaunee language and from our experiences in the classrooms.

FINDINGS

Mohawk and Cayuga curriculum support

Teachers in the Elementary program would like curricular support in the following areas:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic commands in Mohawk and Cayuga for use in the classrooms • word walls and phrases in Mohawk and Cayuga for student and teacher reference • pictures in Mohawk and Cayuga • posters in Mohawk and Cayuga • classroom calendars with Mohawk or Cayuga writing • Mohawk and Cayuga resources for the classroom • lists of signs and commands • books for reading in the languages • pronunciation charts • classes for teachers in the language • support and encouragement to use the language in the school • traditional crafts • list of knowledge keepers will to come to classrooms • language classes for teachers • traditional teachings • traditional ways of teaching • develop our own History/Social Studies curriculum • Haudenosaunee bulletin board frames • Ethno-math • lunch and learn • need somewhere or someone to reach out to for support • workshops for teachers • hands-on activities for students • provide mentorship program for teachers to learn the language • evening and weekend classes • need to know what conversational language can be used while on the job • have someone come to the classroom to teach about ceremonies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting teachers to feel confident in their speaking skills • materials for student use • translation support • professional development opportunities for staff • promote ceremonies and celebrations in the language and that student can attend • colouring pages • social dances • guest speakers • School values listed in the language and support to properly pronounce • opening and closing address with useful pronunciation • education for reconciliation • environmental information • our own famous people • knowledge specific to Science curriculum • rights of passage for students • cultural ways of getting students to engage in school • information and teaching supports to teach about intergenerational trauma • literacy connections • Social Studies/Science/Art connections • evening classes for language instruction • need help to build personal knowledge • audio resources • resources for cultural event • need information on our 'ways of knowing' • teachers need to know how to read and write in our languages • we need simple, applicable language terms that teachers can use in the classroom to incorporate into their own school programs • online language classes • language classes after school • language resources for the whole school - posters etc.
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Haudenosaunee language curriculum support

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books & materials at grade level • Materials that align with the ACTFL proficiency guidelines for reading, writing, listening & speaking • Textbooks for math and various leveled readers • Textbooks & exercise books to reading and writing • Audio/Visual library that has been translated for teacher use • Scope & sequenced teacher’s manuals & exercise books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject specific and grade specific content to support student learning such as reference materials • Reference materials for teachers for assessment and evaluation
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Second language instruction

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum • curricular supports • songs • dancing instruction • cds with language and songs • information on speeches and when given • supportive ways of evaluation • audio resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culture supports • evaluation support • student worksheets - crossword - wordfind – games • digital movie shorts • outdoor games instruction • traditional crafts • outside of classroom ideas for language use
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Six Nations History Supports

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local history written by Six Nations people • local artists • local athletes • stories & traditions • longhouse ceremonies • purposes of longhouse ceremonies • knowledge of Thanksgiving speech & environment • knowledge of creation story • Haudenosaunee values • cultural artifact replicas for students to view • pictures of famous people from our community • outdoor educational resources, i.e., Science • language learning through cooking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history talks by our own people • treaties • wampum belts • history of residential schools • duties of persons in the longhouse • marriage ceremonies • naming ceremonies • hunting traditions • stories for primary children • Science & Social Studies from a Haudenosaunee perspective • supports for staff who do not know the culture & history or who are not from the community
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all staff need an introduction to Six Nations history and culture 	
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Haudenosaunee culture instruction

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written and audio recordings of speeches • information on wampum belts • written and audio recordings of stories • information on condolence cane and family titles • audio recordings of social dances • audio recordings of ceremonial songs • traditional games and explanations • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on Kayanerehkowa & Code of Handsome Lake • information on the cycle of ceremonies • written and audio recordings of personal speeches that can be used for ceremonies • audio recordings of seed songs • explanation of the purpose of ceremonies, when they are done and why • written and audio recordings of the thanksgiving address from simple to difficult
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RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations came not only from the most recent survey but are referenced from language meetings over many years and also from any first-language speakers who have gone over the horizon.

1. The five-year plan for the Language & Culture Centre begin as soon as possible.
2. Decisions be made as soon as possible to determine the governance of the Language and Culture Centre.
3. Decisions be made as soon as possible to determine the overall governance structure for Six Nations Education.
4. Decisions be made as soon as possible what programs will be housed within the Language and Culture Centre so that facility costing can be completed. The following may be included in the building:
 - a) Language and Culture Centre Support Team
 - b) Six Nations Language Commission
 - c) Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo
 - d) Onkwawenna
 - e) Cayuga Adult Immersion
 - f) Onondaga Adult Immersion
 - g) Other
5. Research and collection of Haudenosaunee language and culture materials be started.
6. A plan be set out to work with potential students to attend the adult immersion programs to raise the number of possible teachers for the schools and language programs and for those who may work in the Language and Culture Centre.
7. Consideration be given to establishing a partnership with Six Nations Polytechnic's STEAM program and/or Grand Erie District School Board to establish a Language and Culture semester what would provide Six Nations History, Haudenosaunee Culture and Mohawk, Cayuga or Onondaga credits toward a secondary school diploma.
8. Online and/or face-to-face language programs be made available for Six Nations Elected Council and staff.
9. Online language programs be made available for anyone in the Six Nations or surrounding communities to learn Mohawk, Cayuga or Onondaga or any of the other Haudenosaunee languages.
10. Research be conducted immediately to determine the number of Haudenosaunee speakers in the community who may be at any or all levels of proficiency.
11. Research be conducted immediately to establish a system of determining proficiency levels for speakers with the goal of designing language programs for those who wish to increase their proficiency.

12. A summer program be established to gather specific information from first-language speakers on specific topics that may be at risk of being lost, such as intimacy (i.e., making love in Mohawk), intimate body parts (i.e., vagina, penis), growing gardens, medical terminology, etc.
13. Plans be made to re-sign the whole community with Mohawk/Cayuga/Onondaga signage. Stop signs, road signs, business signs, public building signs, etc.

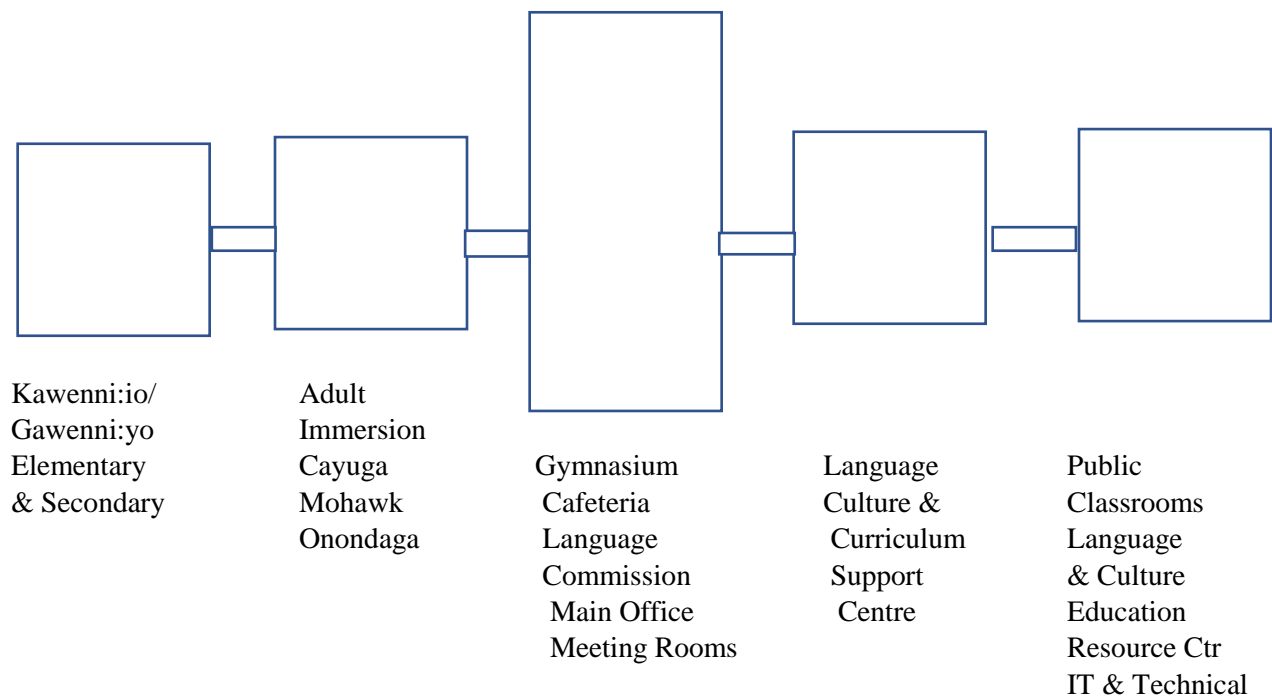
Finally, we were charged with creating a vision for the Language and Culture Centre. We would recommend the following vision:

Vision Statement

Our language and our culture are the heart of our Haudenosaunee being – our language and our identity. In order to maintain who we are in this world, and to ensure our culture and identity for the coming faces, we will center our community learning around our languages and culture an our ways of being. Our Language and Culture Centre will provide support and direction to ensure this vision.

Additional Recommendations

As many people in the community have said or who have first-hand experience, it would be wise to not build a facility that looks from above like a turtle or some other clan animal. The roof lines are often difficult to build and in time the roofs leak and have to be repaired too often which is costly. Community members said, "What's wrong with a box?" This comment generated some thoughts.



FIVE YEAR PLAN	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR	YEAR FIVE
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Board of Directors/Ed Board *Building Committee of the Board *Determine relationship of present boards to a new Education Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identify Education Board * Develop Organization Chart for both English and Immersion Education *Identify senior staffing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Education Board * Language Committees * develop communication policy/strategy * develop governance policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fully Operational Education Board * Fully Operational Language Committees * Policies in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fully Operational Education Board * Fully Operational Language Committees * Policies in place
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building *Search for and obtain land *Search for qualified builder Relationships * How will present Boards work with an overall Education Board? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building *Research into furniture for classrooms and other rooms * Ensure building guarantee for at least three years *Design outdoor areas Relationships *discussion: How will students work together in the building - Socials, Ceremonies etc. * What machinery is needed for audio-visual support for language & culture * Identify all present staff in all language programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Research ideas for Training and Professional Development * research best practices for English teaching, learning, and measurement & evaluation * develop Operations Policies * develop Financial Management Policies * develop HR policies * research best practices for language learning in second language learning, in immersion learning and for adult immersion programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Continue research as needed under the direction of the Language Committees and the Education Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Research continues by staff as needed
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Search for design consultant * Agree on design [form & function] *Draw blueprints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Construction of Building * Landscaping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completed construction of building - exterior and interior [parking lots, barns, greenhouses, etc.] * complete landscaping and out buildings, play yards etc. * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *move into building no later than July of Year 3 to ensure that everything is ready for school in the fall of Year 4 * monitor building deficiencies and insure that these are attended to by builder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * monitor building deficiencies and insure that these are attended to by builder
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Begin discussions on programs to be housed in the facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Begin design of annual plan for the Curriculum Support Centre for All Curricula *Begin design of annual plan for the Curriculum Support Centre for Immersion and Second Language curricula * Begin discussions of what programs will be offered to which groups for revitalization of our Haudenosaunee languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop long term plans for development of materials to support the language programs * where necessary, develop curricula for programs * develop student evaluation guidelines * develop staff evaluation guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Begin development of support items as determined in the long-term plan for language and culture * support culture efforts in programs * support language efforts in programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Revise long term plan for materials development for language programs as may be needed * revised long term plan for cultural support as needed
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Begin discussions on new Language & Culture Centre staffing * Determine how Immersion programs (elementary, secondary & adult) will related and work together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identify Staff needed [language & technical] for Curriculum Support Centre * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Complete staffing process as needed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adult immersion - elementary & secondary school immersion - second language programs - technical support - speakers, readers, writers for development work - senior leadership roles as identified - building maintenance staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing should be complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing should be complete
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Building Budget *Obtain construction funds *May consider fundraising activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure funding to complete construction of the Language & Culture Centre * Ensure funding to purchase equipment and furnishings for the Language & Culture Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ensure long-term funding for staff * ensure long term funding for facility * ensure long term funding to produce professional development for culture and materials support for the language programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ensure long-term funding for staff * ensure long term funding for facility * ensure long term funding to produce professional development for culture and materials support for the language programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ensure long-term funding for staff * ensure long term funding for facility * ensure long term funding to produce professional development for culture and materials support for the language programs
Community Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Regular reports to the education community and the Six Nations community by local media *Annual Report to the Six Nations Community via a newsletter and local media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Regular reports to the education community and the Six Nations community by local media *Annual Report to the Six Nations Community via a newsletter and local media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Regular reports to the education community and the Six Nations community by local media *Annual Report to the Six Nations Community via a newsletter and local media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Regular reports to the education community and the Six Nations community by local media *Annual Report to the Six Nations Community via a newsletter and local media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Regular reports to the education community and the Six Nations community by local media *Annual Report to the Six Nations Community via a newsletter and local media

CONCLUSION

Time is of the essence. We are losing our first-language speakers very quickly and we need to gather their knowledge as soon as we can.

Over time, language and culture have become somewhat unimportant in the community but as we go forward in this century, it looks like we are heading into a language and culture renaissance throughout the community - more and more people are going to the Longhouse, more and more people are wanting to learn one of our languages, more and more people are attending adult language immersion and more and more people are wanting to know more about our culture. We now see that people really want to have an education system that is rooted in language and culture and that will go a long way towards language and cultural revitalization and maintenance.

The Life Long Learning Task Force is taking on an assignment that has been tried several times before - in the late 1980s and the early 1990s and again in 2004-2005. Neither of which processes were accepted by the Six Nations Elected Council because Indian Affairs was not able to guarantee the amount of funding that was needed to develop the kind of education system that the people of Six Nations expected. Hopefully, this time will be successful.