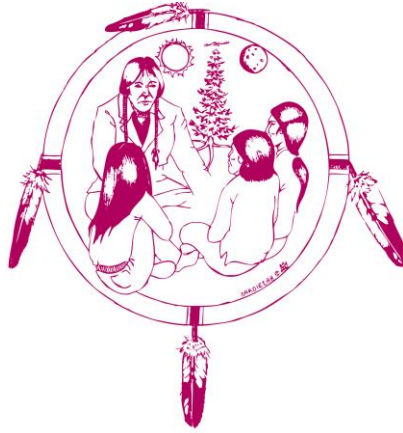


Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education



POLICY 501 **Ahkwesáhsró:non Culture** **and Kanien'keha Language in the Classroom**

Please Note:

AMBE policies are governance documents that state the Board's decision related to an area of operation by stating purpose, guiding principles, basic procedures, and key responsibilities.

AMBE senior management is accountable for implementing Board policies and expected to exercise good judgment when implementing the policies in the context of day-to-day operations. Where appropriate, senior management may decide to develop specific guidelines and procedures, Administrative Frameworks, to ensure the appropriate implementation of Board policy.

This policy was adopted for the first time by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) on:
June 3, 2020

Subsequent amendments:
_____, 20__

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2. Purpose

The purpose of *Policy 501: Ahkwesáhsró:non Culture and Kanien'keha Language in the Classroom*, is to ensure the continued preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Akwesasne Mohawk Community traditions. Preserving and revitalizing our culture and language plays a critical role in ensuring that our students continue to understand the importance of our unique identity, celebrate our heritage, and promote our values and ways of being with each other, as well as within the global community.

3. Definitions

In order of appearance

- 3.1 Culture** Culture is a way of being that defines and distinguishes a people or nation, as expressed through their customs, language, art (*stories, music, dance, visual arts, crafts*), cuisine, social institutions, achievements, and interaction with other peoples and nations.
Culture is composed of:
- *Non-material aspects*, including values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and language, which influences our social norms, rules, and laws that govern our society.
 - *Material aspects* are composed of items that we make and use as an expression of our identity, which includes a wide variety of things, from buildings, clothing, stories, music, dance, visual arts, crafts and many others.

3.2	Preservation	The activity or process of keeping Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language alive among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
3.3	Revitalization	To give focused attention and importance to Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
3.4	Promotion	The act of developing and integrating Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language into the workplace and community activities.
3.5	Protection	The act of saving Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
3.6	The Board	Refers to the <i>Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education</i> , which includes both the governance and administrative structure.
3.7	Board Members	Includes both Trustees (<i>Elected Members</i>) and Ex-officio Members (<i>Portfolio Chiefs and the Director of Education</i>).
3.8	Curriculum	The subjects and material that make up the course of study.
3.9	Cultural Diversity	The existence of different cultures and in turn different knowledges, beliefs, arts, laws, norms, customs and values systems within society.
3.10	Knowledge Keepers and Elders	It is recognized that among the Mohawks of Akwesasne there are individuals like Eminent Leaders and Elders, language and culture experts, Clan Mothers, Faith Keepers, etc., who possess unique and specific knowledge of <i>Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language</i> , whose knowledge should be preserved, revitalized, promoted and protected, and will be required in the development of curriculum.
3.11	Pedagogy	The teaching methods and practices that are used to implement the curriculum.

4. General Guidelines

4.1. Key Principles

The AMBE commits to ensuring:

- 4.1.1 We actively seek to preserve, revitalize, promote and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture (material and non-material) and Kanien'keha language in our classrooms through the development and use of culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy.
- 4.1.2 We are guided by the Hotinonshon:ni principle of seven generations. This principle will ensure that staff encourage students to consider the effect of their decisions today regarding Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language on descendants seven generations into the future.
- 4.1.3 We are committed to providing reasonable levels of human, financial, and material resources necessary for the implementation of this policy.
- 4.1.4 Our Kanien'keha birthright is transmitted through our educational system and is consistent with Hotinoshon:ni teachings.
- 4.1.5 Staff and students promote our identity through our collective strengths, opportunities and lived experiences when participating in local, provincial, and federal indigenous programs, initiatives, and committees.

- 4.1.6 Consistent with Ahkwasáhsró:non culture, everyone at AMBE (*Board Members, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members*) support and participate in creating an inclusive and safe educational space where all cultures are respected and valued.
- 4.1.7 The integration of the four (4) key outcomes of preserving, revitalizing, promoting, and protecting Ahkwasáhsró:non culture (*material and non-material*) and Kanien'keha language into the classroom curriculum and pedagogy as articulated below.

4.2. Key Outcome 1: Preservation of Identity and Enhanced Quality of Life

- 4.2.1 Staff acknowledge the importance of preserving culture in shaping our social relationships, how we experience society, determining our sense of the world and our place in it, and influencing our everyday decisions and actions.
- 4.2.2 Staff recognize that gaining a deeper understanding of our Ahkwasáhsró:non culture is an asset for staff, students, and community. Students will become familiar with material and non-material cultural contributions we have made towards the progress of humanity through a culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy.
- 4.2.3 Material and non-material contributions include, but are not limited to: academics (*language, mathematics, technology*), sciences (*medicinal, environmental, nutritional*), social sciences (*geography, history and economics*), arts (*dance, music, visual, crafts*), mindfulness (*philosophy, beliefs, spirituality*), and governance (*laws, regulations, processes and services*).
- 4.2.4 Staff realize that non-material cultural contributions have the potential to be cultivated into economic opportunities, enabling students to enhance their quality of life and that of the Akwasasne Community as a whole.
- 4.2.5 An evolving understanding of our Ahkwasáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language will result in an increase of personal pride and sense of self within the community; hope for the future of our students through the use of culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy.

4.3. Key Outcome 2: Revitalization of Strength in Cultural Diversity

- 4.3.1 Staff recognize the importance of revitalizing our Ahkwasáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language in our curriculum, while recognizing and respecting the uniqueness of other cultures, and valuing cultural diversity among First Nations and global communities.
- 4.3.2 Staff strongly support the goal of ensuring our students become thoughtful engaged global leaders through their understanding of the role and importance of our Ahkwasáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, as well as that of others.
- 4.3.3 Consistent with our Ahkwasáhsró:non culture and traditions, staff ensure that students respect the uniqueness of each culture, recognize that celebrating cultural diversity strengthens our society by increasing empathy and dialogue, which are the foundation for human peace and progress.

4.4. Key Outcome 3: Promotion of Shared Responsibility

- 4.4.1 Staff are responsible for promoting and enhancing the Ahkwasáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language through the curriculum
- 4.4.2 Staff acknowledge that education is a partnership and a shared responsibility among students, parents/guardians, staff, the Akwasasne Community and the Board with the guidance of our Knowledge Keepers and Elders.

- 4.4.3 Staff recognize the importance of exchange programs involving students, Knowledge Keepers and Elders with other Indigenous communities in order to build bridges, partnerships and an appreciation for our Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language and First Nations as a whole.

4.5. Key Outcome 4: Protection of Innovation in Education

- 4.5.1 Staff seek innovative ways to protect and integrate traditional teachings into our curriculum and pedagogy; providing our students with the skills to thrive in the modern world, while being rooted in firm knowledge of and respect for the past.
- 4.5.2 Staff strongly believe that a 21st century curriculum, which is in harmony with our Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language will enable our students and community to achieve sustainable progress.
- 4.5.3 Staff support a dual language curriculum which will result in increased economic opportunities for students leading to an enhanced quality of life. Kanien'keha, our traditional language, will allow students to access the wisdom of our Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Hotinoshon:ni traditions, while English will enable our students to participate fully on the world stage.

5. Process and Procedures

- 5.1.1 Staff will be guided by the knowledge, understanding and experiences of Board Members and the community's Knowledge Keepers and Elders to preserve, revitalize, promote or protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language through the development and implementation of appropriate curriculum and pedagogy.
- 5.1.2 Staff will actively deepen their knowledge and understanding of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, as well as the Hotinoshon:ni principle of seven generations. AMBE will support staff to achieve this goal by offering on-line and in person opportunities.
- 5.1.3 In the spirit of the Hotinoshon:ni principle of seven generations, staff shall have a deep understanding of the knowledges contributed by our people towards humanity in the following subjects:
- academics (*language, mathematics, technology*),
 - sciences (*medicinal, environmental, nutritional*),
 - social sciences (*geography, history, and economics*),
 - arts (*dance, music, visual, crafts*),
 - mindfulness (*philosophy, beliefs, spirituality*) and
 - governance (*laws, regulations, processes, and services*) amongst others;
- 5.1.4 Staff will be expected to promote Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at school, centre and community events in order to encourage personal pride and sense of self within the community and hope for the future of our students and community.
- 5.1.5 Staff will endeavour to strengthen their understanding of the role of cultural diversity as the foundation for human peace and progress. Therefore, staff will actively seek to develop a bridge between the Akwesasne Mohawk community and other communities and peoples, leading to opportunities for dialogue, creating partnerships, encouraging mentorships, developing friendships, and exchanging knowledge and ideas for students and staff.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board Members will:

- 6.1.1 Ensure that the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education makes every effort to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language by supporting the development and implementation of an appropriate curriculum and pedagogy;
- 6.1.2 Continue to grow in their knowledge and understanding of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language and the role each have in building a stronger Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk identity; encouraging personal pride and sense of self within our community; increasing employment opportunities; and enhancing quality of life for our students and community;
- 6.1.3 Expand their knowledge related to how our people have contributed towards development of humanity through: academics (*language, mathematics, technology*), sciences (*medicinal, environmental, nutritional*), social sciences (*geography, history and economics*), arts (*dance, music, visual, crafts*), mindfulness (*philosophy, beliefs, spirituality*) and governance (*laws, regulations, processes and services*) amongst other areas of knowledge;
- 6.1.4 Seek to understand and advocate for the importance of respecting the uniqueness of all cultures and the critical role all cultures collectively play in increasing empathy and dialogue; and
- 6.1.5 Ensure the application and revision of this policy.

6.2 The Director of Education will:

- 6.2.1 Support the Board of Trustees in its efforts to ensure that the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education makes every effort to preserve, revitalize, promote and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language through the development and implementation of an appropriate curriculum and pedagogy;
- 6.2.2 Support the development of an Ahkwesáhsró:non Culture and Kanien'keha Language Advisory Committee to act in an advisory role to ensure the implementation of this policy;
- 6.2.3 Offer opportunities on the critical role culture and language have in building a stronger Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk identity; encouraging a sense of personal pride and sense of self within our community; increasing employment opportunities; and enhancing quality of life for our students and community;
- 6.2.4 Provide opportunities highlighting material and non-material forms of knowledge produced by our community; detailing how our knowledges have contributed to the progress of humanity;
- 6.2.5 Ensure the delivery of opportunities underscore the importance of cultural diversity and its role in promoting empathy and dialogue; (Policy 413) and
- 6.2.6 Offer Kanien'keha language training opportunities designed for staff.

6.3 Ahkwesáhsró:non: non Culture and Kanien'keha Language Advisory Committee will:

- 6.3.1 Provide support and guidance through appropriate tools and training for the successful implementation of this policy;
- 6.3.2 Be chaired by the Superintendent of Mohawk Language and Culture; and
- 6.3.3 Be accountable to the Director of Education.

6.4 Non-Academic Staff will:

- 6.4.1 Participate in training related to Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and the Hotinonshon:ni principle of seven generations;
- 6.4.2 Participate in training related to the importance of cultural diversity and its role in promoting peace, progress, empathy, and dialogue;
- 6.4.3 Be required to use language and culture related resources;
- 6.4.4 Participate in Kanien'keha language opportunities; and
- 6.4.5 Promote Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at school, centre and community events in order to encourage personal pride and sense of self within the community and hope for the future of our students and community as required.

6.5 Academic Staff will:

- 6.5.1 Participate in training related to Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and the Hotinonshon:ni principle of seven generations;
- 6.5.2 Participate in training related to material and non-material forms of knowledge produced by our community; detailing how our knowledges have contributed to the progress of humanity;
- 6.5.3 Actively seek to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture (material and non-material) and Kanien'keha language in our classrooms through the development and use of culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy;
- 6.5.4 Be required to use language and culture related resources;
- 6.5.5 Select resources that would appropriately represent our Ahkwesáhsró:non culture;
- 6.5.6 Participate in opportunities related to the importance of cultural diversity and its role in promoting peace, progress, empathy, and dialogue;
- 6.5.7 Participate in Kanien'keha language opportunities; and
- 6.5.8 Promote Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at school, centre and community events in order to encourage personal pride and sense of self within the community and hope for the future of our students and community as requested.

7. Policy Review and Revision

Principles and Directives:

- 7.1.1 It is important for the policies of the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education to remain current and serve the best interest of Akwesasne students and the Akwesasne community.
- 7.1.2 The Board of Trustees recognizes that this policy should be reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years and/or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.

Procedures:

- 7.1.3 The Board of Trustees will establish a timeline for the regular review of this policy that requires the policy be reviewed at the minimum 5 years from the date of approval by the Board or as required by new circumstance or obligations.

Roles and Responsibilities:

7.1.4 Board of Trustees will:

- Establish a timeline for the regular review of this policy and ensure that it is respected; and
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed at a minimum every 5 years from the date of approval, or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.

7.1.5 The Director of Education will:

- Initiate a review of this policy at a minimum every 5 years from the date of approval, or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.