



SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK EDUCATION

December 2025 Newsletter

Supporting every Sagamok citizen to reach their full potential.



Niibaa-Namaang

Winter Solstice Edition

Waab'aagaa Giizis - September

Binaakwii Giizis - October

Shkadin Giizis - November



Aanii, hello, and welcome to the Winter Solstice edition of the Education Newsletter.

This edition encompassed two seasons: one of gratitude and one of reflection. Waab'aagaa Giizis, Binaakwii Giizis, and Shkadin Giizis (September, October, and November) included a flurry of activities that match that of recent snowfall! The calendars for Daycare, Biidaaban, and the Lifelong Learning Centre were as full as the table at a Thanksgiving Feast. Overflowing! We are especially proud of the opportunities that our Elders had to engage with Education programming over these last few months.

From classroom visits by family and caregivers, to mental wellness information sessions, new literacy and language programming, and supports for post-secondary applications and career coaching, Fall has been a bustling season of opportunities for Sagamok learners of every age. Land-based and cultural learning featured prominently this season: students participated in Fall Harvest, Truth & Reconciliation drum social, and Taasewaang wreath-making, to name just a few.

With all of that under our 'Santa belts', the time has come for us to pause, reflect, and lean towards serenity during winter solstice and over the Christmas break. Educators and students alike need an opportunity to digest all the amazing learning from the past season, and take time to seek personal peace and gratitude.

Chi-miigwech to our teachers, education assistants, classroom helpers, early childhood educators, custodians, cooks, infrastructure team, administrative and finance staff, Visiting Elders, Guidance & Career Coaches, volunteers, and education leadership. Your devotion to creating high-quality educational experiences and supported learning environments makes education in Sagamok sparkle! You are appreciated and valued for the important and meaningful role you play in the development of our students, and the positive contributions you make towards supporting coworkers, families, students, and community members throughout the year, so they may reach their full potential.

Wishing you a Niibaa-Namaang (Christmas) season that brings joy, balance, and thoughtful reflection on what Nimkoodadim (new beginning, new year) looks like for you. Happy 2026, everyone! Miigwech for this meaningful year!

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Shki Waase-Aaban Binoojiinh Gamik - Daycare
Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik - Elementary
Lifelong Learning Centre
Education Supports



Director's Reflections

Vance McPherson, Director of Education

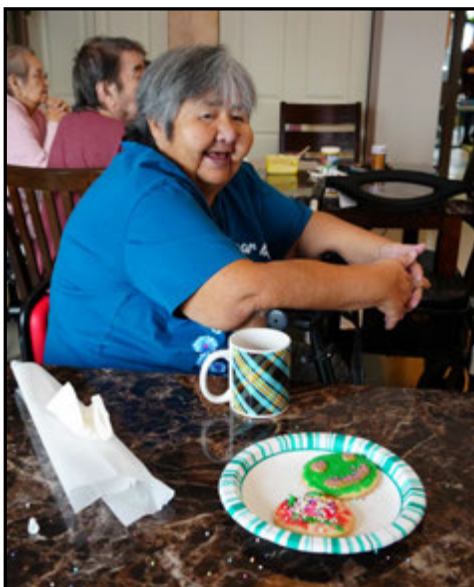
On the day that I write this reflection, mnidoo giizoonhs prepares for her full ascent this evening, and the season's first deep cold has frozen the forest beyond my window. And even as the days grow impossibly short, we, like others across the Northern Hemisphere, are united in a single hope, a single inevitability, that the light will return.

As we prepare to slow down to celebrate this season, I think most fondly of all that we accomplished in the season past:

- We have onboarded an Anishinaabemowin Manager (welcome home, Marjorie!) to accelerate the development of our language programs;
- We have measurably improved literacy and numeracy in several Biidaaban grades;
- We have increased awareness of bullying among staff, students, and parents, made its reporting easier, and have a robust plan to decrease its prevalence;
- We have begun the process of optimizing all our Lifelong Learning Centre processes to satisfy the needs of all of our learners; and
- We have deepened our relationships with other Sagamok Departments and other education partners across Northeastern Ontario.

The fortnight's celebration will be a brief pause; January's activities will be as much a flurry as her weather. This year we are committed to early and aligned calendars for all of our Education services, a redistribution of resources to support language and curriculum development, and a broad community engagement on Sagamok's "five star education model" – what our system will ideally look like once, through the First Nations with Schools Collective work, our community's full sovereign jurisdiction over education (which Sagamok inherently possesses) is recognized by all.

It continues to be an honour and a privilege to serve this great nation, this great community.



Shki Waase-Aaban Binoojiinh Gamik Daycare



MINO NIIMAANAMAANG!
FROM THE SHKI WAASE-AABAN
BINOOJIINH GAMIK



Anishinaabemowin - English Language Practice

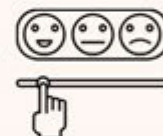
Daycare practiced the following words in October - November - December
Try them together at home.

Ozaawmingaande - Orange



Miigwechwe-Giizhgat - Thanksgiving Day

Aanish ezhiyaayin nongo? - How are you feeling today?



Mooz - Moose

Mijjim - Food



Waawaashkeshi - Deer

Kosmaan - Pumpkin



Zookpoo - It is snowing



Zgaakwan gbiiskawaagan - Button up your coat

Gdaakwos na? - Are you sick?



Aanish ezhiwebak gojiing? - What is happening outside?



Akiiiaande - Brown



Ndoo-ngam - I am singing

Gojiing - Outside



Biiskan kbiiskwaagan - Put on your coat.

Gooni-nini zhi'aada - Let's make a snowman.



Goon - Snow

Niibaa-Namaang - Christmas



Cultural Teaching for Daycare Staff During PD Day



Shki Waase-Aaban Binoojiinh Gamik - Daycare held a Professional Development Day for staff members on November 10. The daycare was closed for staff to partake in scheduled training and information sessions, including a teaching from Cultural Worker, Wayne Southwind. He shared about the four common medicines – Tobacco, Cedar, Sweetgrass, and Sage – their historical uses and how they are still applicable to daily life today; where, how, and when to properly harvest and store these medicines, as well as how they are used in ceremony and the special meaning they carry with them.

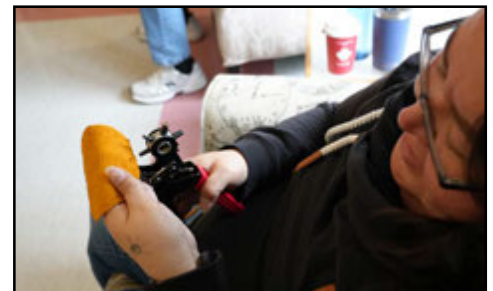
Under Wayne's guidance, staff created a hand-made leather medicine pouch to be worn around their neck or to carry on their person. Everyone was invited to first cleanse their minds through reflection and with a smudge to start the teaching in a good way. They learned about both the tradition of medicines and the pouch itself. Then, they were invited to sew their pouch in their own time, to spend time in reflection while making it, and to offer up their most positive

intentions during the creative process. Each staff member was welcomed to choose the amount of each medicine to include, because each pouch is to be as unique as its owner. Wayne added that they could also place an item of personal significance inside the pouch if they chose to, something that would remain private to themselves. As previously mentioned, the four main medicines Anishinaabe historically use include: Semaa (Tobacco), Giishkaandak (Cedar), Wiingashk (Sweetgrass), and (Mshkodewashk (Sage).

Teachings like these play an important role in ensuring that knowledge is passed on and culturally significant traditions continue to thrive. Not everyone has received these teachings or may have received varying information throughout their lives. Incorporating these teachings into professional development offers staff a great opportunity to share ideas and ask questions to clarify and gain a greater understanding about Anishinaabe culture as well as how it applies to yourself and coworkers. Staff often

take this knowledge with them as they develop new learning units for Daycare Friends so that they too can absorb cultural teachings. It also allows staff to feel confident that the information they are sharing is accurate and meaningful for students as they utilize the medicines and teachings in day-

to-day operations of the Daycare. Gchi miigwech to Wayne for offering this special opportunity to Daycare Staff on this Professional Development Day; for sharing your knowledge about medicines and the medicine pouch with everyone present, as well as providing all the necessary supplies.



Turn Your Love of Children into an Exciting Career Move!

Sault College's Pre-ECE Micro-Credentials program is a great learning opportunity for you to explore Early Childhood Education as a career. Presented by Sault College. **Tuition is fully sponsored.**

To learn more, visit: www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com

Shki Waase-aaban Binoojiinh Gamik Daycare

NOW ENROLLING

Details at www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com



Miigwechwe-Giizhgit - Thanksgiving Luncheon with Daycare Families and Friends was celebrated on October 10. Friends helped their parents or caregivers select dried flowers, mini-lights, and fall picks to create a festive centre piece together. Family photos at the Daycare entrance Thanksgiving display zone, followed by a full course hot turkey feast prepared in-house by Priscilla, rounded out the annual tradition beautifully. Miigwech Daycare Staff for all that you do to involve families in the education of their children.



Miigwech to Daycare
 Family and Friends for
 celebrating
 Miigwechwe-Giizhgat
 with us!





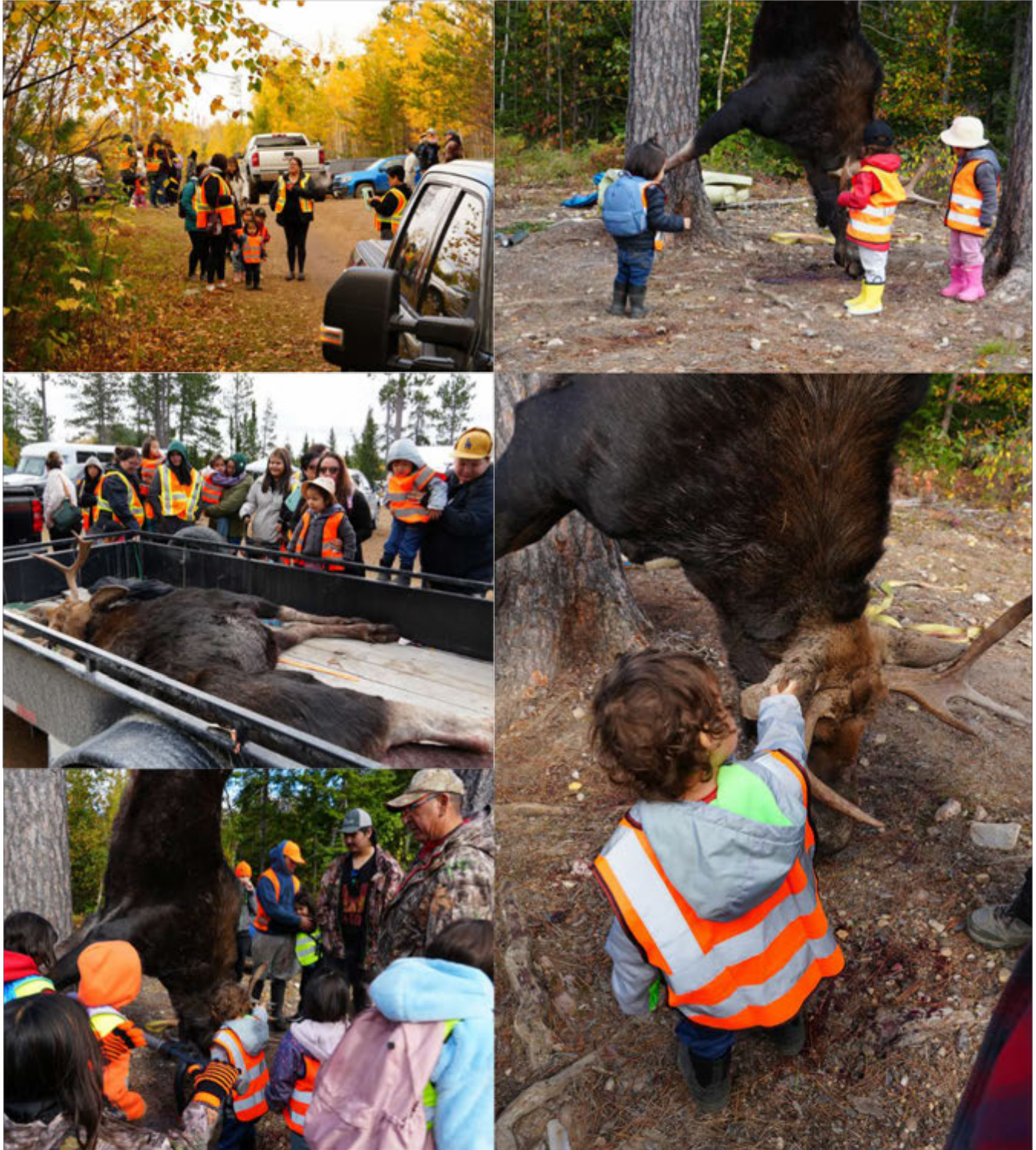
Daycare FALL HARVEST Visit 2025

October 8/25
Fall Harvest Visit

This year's Fall Harvest visit was a great time had by all. We were able to see three mooz being harvested (last year we didn't get to see any) so that very exciting! Our friends enjoyed exploring their surroundings and got a handful of treats along the way by some community members who attended, along with one of our departments in Zagamok. We got to partake in a DIY BBQ sauce activity with our kiddos and some even played some bingo! 🍷🍷🍷

Photos and content provided by Cassandra Toulouse, RECE





Fall Harvest - October 2025

Daycare Friends and their Teachers made the long drive up to the fall harvest grounds to discover and experience this annual tradition since time immemorial. They had an opportunity to touch a moose that had been brought in by hunter Julian Kiernan, watch fish filleting, check out furs at a booth Michael Abitong displayed onsite, participate in BBQ sauce making, crafts, and enjoy the fall scenery on a crisp, clear Autumn day.



October 9/25

The Great Gatherers

For this morning's outing, we went for a walk through our trail behind our centre to gather up some branches, leaves, pine cones and birch bark for our Thanksgiving activity tomorrow. Some friends made some mooz calls while in the trail and they were also very helpful in pulling/pushing the wagon. What a beauty of a morning though! 🌞🍂🍁

Photos and content provided by Cassandra Toulouse, RECE





Leisure Farms Pumpkin Patch Outing!

Today was a great day. It was a bit chilly out but everyone enjoyed themselves out at the pumpkin patch. We went out on a tractor ride to the fire to have lunch, they then got to play in the big tubes and on the haystack. When we were done there we had a tractor ride back to the main building where we went into the corn maze. Our friends got to choose a pumpkin to decorate and take home. We also had hot chocolate and cookies.

Here are a few pictures I took while out there.
Photos and content provided by Tiffany Bell, RECE

October 23/25

Leisure Farms

We loved seeing everyone have such a great time yesterday. Thankful for the memories and that we are blessed with the ability to plan these special family outings. It was a great experience, and we are so happy to spend time with all of you.



Photos and content provided by Charmaine Abitong, RECE





October 30/25

Cleaning the pumpkin!

Some of our preschoolers got to clean a pumpkin this morning. They said it was yucky, slimy and sticky. They each took turns using big spoons to scoop out the seeds.

Good job friends!

Photos and content provided by Tiffany Bell, RECE



October 31/25
Look what I'm doing
today!

We had so much fun
trick or treating.

Thanks to the
generosity of our
community
departments for all
the yummy treats,
and our amazing
teachers, cook, and
admin staff brought
treats as well. Happy
Hallow'een everyone.

🍁🍁🍁 Photos and
content provided by
Charmaine Abitong,
RECE.



Halloween Trick or Treating 🍁

A few pictures from today, October 31st.
We ventured out to go trick or treating
with our preschooler and toddler friends
around community buildings.

Our kiddies enjoyed going out and
getting lots of treats; their bags were so
heavy, teachers were carrying them for
them. They were so excited to see Patrick
and Squidward at CWD. Wishing
everyone a Happy Halloween and be safe.

*Photos and content provided by Tiffany
Bell, RECE*



Seven Grandfather Teachings



Love | Zaagidwin

To be at peace with yourself and able to express love to your family, friends, and community through your actions and words.



Honesty | Gwe'kwaadziwin

To walk through life with integrity is to know honesty.



Respect | Mnaadendimowin

Respect is an attitude. To honour and listen to ourselves, elders, parents and teachers is a sign of respect.



Humility | Dbaadeniziwin

Think of others before yourself. Humility is to live your life free from boasting and to have a modest sense of your own worth.



Bravery | Aakwa'ode'win

To have courage is to do what is right.



Wisdom | Nbwaakaawin

Wisdom is gained through experience and knowledge. To have wisdom is to know the difference between right and wrong.



Truth | Debwewin

To know truth is to know and understand all of the original laws as given by the Creator and to remain faithful to them.



DAYCARE FRIENDS VISIT ELDERS EAGLE LODGE

On November 27, Daycare Toddler Friends travelled to Elders Eagle Lodge to sing songs, put actions to rhymes, dance, squeal, and hold Elders' hands – offering a nice early winter reprieve for residents and social interaction development for our young members.



Reading Buddies *Transition Program at Biidaaban*

On November 27, daycare friends and their staff helpers took a little tour in their school van all the way up the hill to Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik. Miigwech to Marilyn Jones for being the designated Daycare van driver and for her countless trips safely delivering daycare friends to special events. Miigwech also to Doris Abitong, a member of the Education Committee, and volunteer at the Daycare to support Anishinaabemowin Language instruction, who supported friends on this venture.



Today's special event involved Reading Buddies with the Grade 7 students. This transitional learning opportunity for daycare friends is designed to support our young friends as they develop awareness and comfort towards transitioning from Daycare to Biidaaban in September of 2026. Why start so soon, you ask? This is the first of several programs daycare friends will be invited to participate in over the school year, allowing for multiple visits to various locations within Biidaaban (library, classrooms, gym, cafeteria) and through various learning platforms (reading, physical education, early learning classroom facilities, introduction to teacher and other staff). This repeated exposure to new experiences situated in the same location allows daycare friends to adjust, overcome trepidations, and begin to move around comfortably in what will become their new school environment. Compared to the Daycare, Biidaaban is BIG!



There are many more students roaming its hallways and a lot more activity! Programs like Reading Buddies were developed to help ease young students into this new environment and reduce feelings of overwhelm when they begin early learning.

Shki Waase-Aaban Binoojiinh Gamik and Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik have been working collaboratively for many years now to offer this special opportunity to our young members, which allows them to adapt at a gentler pace. Daycare friends always seem excited when they arrive at Biidaaban on their bus, and Biidaaban students and staff are equally excited to see the little daycare friends come through the doors. Miigwech to the Grade 7 teacher, Tia Thrush, and students who welcomed the shy daycare friends into their classroom. It was so nice of these senior students to share a special hand-picked book with their buddy at their desk or on the beanbag chairs, wherever everyone felt most comfortable. As Grade 8s next September, they will no doubt be called upon to act as ambassadors to support these same daycare friends as they continue their education journey at Biidaaban. It is these types of special, student-led supports that help to set Sagamok Education apart.



October 3/25

Look what I'm doing today!
We had an awesome time
roasting hot dogs,
marshmallows, and making
s'mores. Some of our friends
explored the in trees just
behind our fire area. What
great way time end our week.
We all have a campfire smoke,
marshmallow on our coats and
clothes. Hopefully it washes off
easily, a little bit of mess in just
proof that we had fun and they
enjoyed their yummy treats.



*Photos and content provided
by Charmaine Abitong*



Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik



MINO NIIMAANAMAANG!
FROM BIIDAABAN
KINOOMAAGEGAMIK!





Photos provided by Rae-Lyn McGregor

Truth & Reconciliation Drum Social & Every Child Matters Orange Shirt Day



Blue Jay Creek Fish Culture Station Tour

November 12, 2025 - The drive to Tehkummah was a lengthy one for students riding the bus; according to them! The two-hour journey took place during one of the first snowfalls of the season and roadsides were covered in about 10cm of fresh, white snow that had accumulated overnight. The pre-cambrian shield along the route looked as though it had been dusted with confectioner's sugar. The temperature hung around zero degrees, but the air was filled with a chill and light mist. Once you crossed the Swing Bridge in Little Current, things appeared remarkably different! There was no snow, and the golden yellow tamaracks amongst the cedars stood out against the moody blue sky and snow clouds on the island's horizon. The view of the Lacloche Foothills from the top of 10 Mile Point was magnificently clear and the children were mesmerized by nature's beauty.

The Grade 6/7 classes enjoyed a day trip to



explore a fish hatchery facility near the Southern tip of Manitoulin Island. The Blue Jay Creek Fish Culture Station is one of nine hatcheries in Ontario; it is operated by the Ministry of Natural Resources. There are other hatcheries located here in the North -- Englehart, Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, and Dorion, and in Southern Ontario,

they are in Chatsworth, Normandale, White Lake, and Harwood.



Hatchery Technician, Cassandra Glenn, began by outlining what the students had in store for them on the tour:

- how the fish eggs are spawned in Lake Manitou;
- how the fish are gathered to bring into the hatchery;
- the disinfection process, which is used to prevent disease and ensure the health of the species and facility; and
- how the hatchery raises fish from egg stage to fingerling size, ready for stocking lakes all over Ontario.

The Blue Jay Creek hatchery raises primarily walleye (pickerel), rainbow trout, lake trout, and splake; a hybrid fish created by mating a male brook trout and female lake trout. Cassandra says you can say the hatchery 'farms' the fish, but unlike 'fish farm stations' who raise fish for a food source, the hatchery's objective is rehabilitation, species preservation, and restocking for recreational fishing.

For the tour, students were divided into three groups, each led by a knowledgeable Hatchery Technician. This tour proved to be a highly educational, land-based outing for students! Here is a summary of some interesting points learned while on the tour:

- This year the hatchery gathered 950,000 fish eggs!

- A tool called the Von Bayer Trap is a 12-inch-long trough. It captures loose eggs and lines them up to be counted efficiently (it would be impossible to go one by one the Technician joked with the students). Eggs are also measured by volume and a special mathematical equation helps determine a more precise estimate.
- 1 trout will carry between 3,000 to 9,000 eggs! Egg production begins at around 3 years of age. These fish can live to be quite old, too, with one trout on record reaching 50+ years!
- Eggs are disinfected/cleaned prior to incubation to prevent disease and to ensure healthy specimens from the onset.
- One section of the hatchery showed students 'Heath Tray Stacks' – with 8 trays in a stack, and each tray containing 2 litres of eggs, the system held just shy of one million eggs at time of visit.
- Green eggs are fertilized eggs! They hatch in about a month or two following the 'eyed up' (eyes are visible within the egg) stage.



- Once the eggs reach hatching stage, they are released into large tanks for 'grow out'.
- Walleye are special and require a different incubator because the eggs are 'stickier'. If the eggs clump together, they smother each other and eggs will die. The walleye incubator constantly churns/rotates to prevent this clumping.

- Walleye eggs are only 1mm long (size of mosquito larvae).



- Walleye are cannibalistic and will prey on each other, so the hatchery needs to feed them frequently! This is done by an automated feeder unit in each tank that dispenses food every 7 minutes!
- The on-site water treatment centre converts ammonia from the fish into nitrites, and then to nitrates to maintain a healthy environment for fish to thrive. An oxygenator also pushes oxygen into the tanks.
- Students viewed tanks full of 'Fingerlings'; a specific size/length of fish that will be ready for release in April!
- Some tanks hold/are growing 16,000 fish! There are different tanks for different stages of development.
- A three tiered 'semi-recycled' water system is used at the hatchery. One part uses the local Blue Jay creek as a water source.

Students were very captivated by what was happening at the hatchery, and curious too! Many questions were asked after the various units of the facility were explained. Some of the interesting ones were:

How durable are the eggs?

Very durable! They are bouncing off rocks in natural environments, so they are quite strong.

What does the egg look like when it's ready to hatch? Like a fish? (i.e. frog eggs transform and look like a frog with legs appearing, etc.)

They look like the shape of a fish but appear like an egg sack. Fish lay on their side using the egg sack as its primary source of nutrients over several weeks before they are ready to 'swim up'.

Why are fish slimy?

They have a mucous membrane around them to protect them from environmental damage (bouncing off rocks) and disease.

The Grade 6/7 classes were accompanied on this field trip by their teachers, Ms. Poirier, Ms. Thrush, Ms. Dam and educational assistants Ms. Piche and Ms. Assinewe, as well as land-based lead, Michael Abitong. Chi miigwech to everyone involved in orchestrating such an amazing educational outing, for exceptional learning outside of the classroom, and for supporting students on this day-long journey from home, across Manitoulin Island, all points in between, and back again. Miigwech to the bus driver as well for delivering students safely and waiting patiently while they discovered all that the Blue Jay Creek Fish Culture Station in Tehkummah has to offer.

Career Path: Fish Hatchery Technician; check out Aquaculture programs offered in college/university around Ontario and beyond. Contact a Guidance & Career Coach at the Lifelong Learning Centre if this type of work interests you, and you want more information/ direction on the possibilities open to you.



Honouring Remembrance Day

A Remembrance Day Service with representatives from the Royal Canadian Legion, was shared in the Biidaaban gymnasium on Friday, November 7 at 10:00am.

Staff and students gathered, alongside honoured Legion guests, to reflect on the many sacrifices made during both world wars. They focused on the need to 'never forget' and to remember those who stood up for the peace and freedoms we all enjoy today.

The ceremony included a wreath laying at the front of the gathering for all to view and reflect on. Jason Solomon and the boys' drumming group provided an opening Honour Song, and Grade 6 student, Leisa Paibomsai, recited "In Flanders Field". Remembrance Day posters created by the students decorated the gym walls, adding a personal touch to the day's awareness and significance in honouring and remembering.



EL 2 Visits Poirier's Store



On October 1, the Early Learning 2 class went on a special excursion to Poirier's Clover Farm Grocery Store. In the couple weeks leading up to this trip, the students prepared by creating recipe lists and then working together to build a grocery list of the items needed for upcoming Fall Harvest Activities.

The visit was a wonderful hands-on learning experience. The children had the chance to explore the store, find their ingredients, and see how their planning connected to real-world shopping.

A heartfelt Miigwech goes out to Gilles Poirier and his staff for their warm welcome and special treat throughout our visit. We also want to extend our appreciation to the other customers in the store for their patience and understanding as our eager learners made their way through the aisles.

We are excited to use the items we gathered today in the fun Fall Harvest projects that will take place over the next couple of weeks!

Article shared by Principal Becky Toulouse on Biidaaban FaceBook page



Biidaaban Visits Ojibwe Cultural Foundation *Sagamok's History on Display*

September 15-18 - Students from Biidaaban traveled to the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation (OCF) in September to view an archaeological exhibit of Sagamok ancestral belongings. The exhibit was debuted at Sagamok's New Community Hall during Powwow Weekend and marks the culmination of the 5-year "La Cloche Cataloguing, Learning, and Sharing Project." The collection is now temporarily displayed at the OCF, which offered an exciting opportunity for young Sagamonians to see stories of their own history displayed in a professional museum setting. The LaCloche Project team includes Alicia Hawkins (University of Toronto Anthropology), Sarah Hazell (Canadian Archaeological Association and University of Toronto), Naomi Recollet (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation), and Allen Toulouse (Historical Researcher, Sagamok Anishnawbek).



Hostesses, Naomi Recollet, Collections Manager, and Shaelynn Recollet, Junior Curator & Cultural Programmer, from the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, greeted students from Biidaaban as they entered the museum located in M'Chigeeng. "The history that is in this room is very important!" they exclaimed during their introductions. "Fort La Cloche, located in your community of Sagamok, had Archaeologists come to the Fort about 60-70 years ago and they did studies of the grounds surrounding it. They found materials and items in the ground after excavating. This exhibit at the OCF shows a small part of what was uncovered. The entire collection holds about 56,000 items. That's a lot of items! We are here today to view these items and learn about the history of Sagamok and why some of those items are significant," exclaimed Shaelynn enthusiastically.

"At first, we wanted to figure out how to start when we were developing this exhibit," explained Shaelynn. She began the tour with the belongings that ancestors had made by hand, for example, pottery. "Show of hands of how many knew that the Anishinaabe made pottery?" asked Naomi. "Unique designs, arrowheads, stone tools – all demonstrate how ingenious our people were to use these things from the earth to help us roam and survive," explained Naomi. She went on to describe how medicine people used to wear buffalo horns on their head to differentiate themselves, which is why you see some figures looking like that within the tapestries. Some of the oldest artifacts were contained in glass viewing cases which still allowed for an up-close and personal look by museum guests. They included different items that reflected what it was like to live at the fort. Over 5,000-year-

old artifacts and shards were shared with students to hold! “As Anishinaabe, we know it is important to hold items in order to reconnect with them [the item] and their ancestry,” noted Shaelynn as she passed the items around the room. She added, “there are over 46 boxes of ancestral material containing 57,000 items!” Students were given opportunities to hold the historic items, one of which was an axe head or chopping tool.

“As part of the exhibit, we want to show things that came from the ground, but we also had some artists recreate some of the items to see what they would fully look like - recreating the history of Anishinaabe,” Shaelynn supplied. She showed the students a spearhead. “What is it used for?” she enquired of the students. “It was used for protection and used to hunt animals for food.” A coin was passed around from 1857. “Now we are in 2025! That’s how old some artifacts are,” stated Shaelynn. Mr. J asked the students to figure out the difference to determine how old the coin was. With some quick math, it was determined to be 168 years old! Students thought perhaps it was a bitcoin! Next, they passed around a tool made of iron which was identified as a candle snuffer. Some students suggested ways the tool could be improved upon for modern times! Progress? A thinly carved bone with a small scoop on the end turned out to be an ear spoon. The kids were disgusted!

“How long did it take to find all these things?” the students asked. Belongings were dug up in the 60s and 70s. Archeologists spent a couple of years at the site. Today, as the host of these belongings, it’s important to know how to take care of them until they are returned to Sagamok where they come from. “We have small pieces of artifacts, but we are unsure how to utilize these,” added Naomi. Pieces of stone, pottery, bones, wood, nails, pipe, shards are typically found during an archaeological dig. Students were then asked to consider:

What should we do with these small pieces?

Do we return them to the earth to put them to rest?

Or should we use them to make pieces of art?

This group’s consensus was that the ancestral belongings should be returned to the earth to be put to rest. Students had another opportunity to look at the belongings in the display cases before breaking for lunch. “It makes me very happy that you came to visit us today,” said Shaelyn. “Our plan is that these artifacts will be returned to your community soon. These things at the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation are ready to come home,” she concluded. Students enjoyed a unique opportunity to view historical findings from within their home community, learning about themselves and their ancestry, and recording their experiences on the handout Mr. J had them complete as they explored the centre. Lunch was served and students boarded the bus once again for the long journey back to Biidaaban.



Biidaaban Wins 1st Place! *2025 Annual Cross Country Meet*

This year's Cross Country Meet was a little different from past events. The EL1 and EL2 students requested an opportunity to participate in a race since the Meet typically includes Grades 1 through 8. Mr. Kevin Lester, Physical Education Teacher, set up a 100m racecourse on the soccer pitch for the newest students of Biidaaban, and they enthusiastically ran the distance easily and with smiles as big as their spirits on their faces!

The day of the Meet, October 22, was rather misty and overcast. The fall colours were muted, but the high spirits of competitors made up for anything the weather threw at the annual regional Track Meet. Spectators lined both sides of Toulouse Bay Road from Biidaaban all the way past the first offshoot road to the East. Seven schools competed in the Meet this year; one more over last year! Grandmas and Grandpas, Aunties and Uncles, Moms, Dads, Caregivers – came out in droves (despite the drizzle) to cheer on their special competitors! Teaching staff kept students organized to arrive at the starting line on time for their heat, provided support with stopwatch and time recordings, placement and participation ribbons, and clearing the track for the next set of runners up.



Mr. Lester organized the schedule of heats by grade, and announced “on your mark, get set, GO” each time students stepped up to the

start line ready to run. Students were all very enthusiastic about the Cross Country Meet and while competitive, there remained a level of welcoming and friendliness amongst all schools on site. A chance to meet and mingle with other area schools, enjoy the outdoors, laughing, searching for natural treasures in the nearby sand/shrubbery, and playing a game of soccer or touch tag while patiently awaiting their grade to be called up. The Grade 8 class, supported by Mr. Kevin Maracle and classroom Educational Assistant Jeanette Steinke, operated a drink and snack canteen as part of their annual fundraising efforts towards the year end graduation trip. Backpacks lined the chain link fence surrounding the athletic encampment of school sun shelters and gathering areas where students could take a break and enjoy lunch together.



Bruce Southwind and Patrick Wemigwans provided Safety Patrol for each race; Bruce leading the students on the course to the designated turnaround point, and Patrick acting as ‘Sweeper’ ensuring all students were accounted for on the trail and provided support should anyone sustain injury or need additional encouragement to complete the 1km race. With the start of the race being all downhill, competitors started off strong, but the return to the finish line was a long and steep grind uphill, testing anyone's resilience and perseverance, much less trying to beat a record time. The positive cheers and encouraging words from spectators propelled students to the finish line every time!

At the end of the day, it was Biidaaban who came out on top! Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik won 1st place overall and was awarded a trophy as tall as an early learner.



It is now proudly displayed in the showcase at the school entrance. It will be 'up for grabs' again next October at the 2026 Biidaaban Cross Country Meet, but for this entire year, students, staff, and visitors to the school can appreciate its magnitude and feel great pride in this honourable achievement! Miigwech to Kevin Lester for his dedication to organizing this annual sporting event, and for encouraging students to perform to the best of their athletic abilities, through his positive example towards fitness, health, and wellbeing.



Miigwech to all of the staff, volunteers, and spectators who supported this event with their time and presence to ensure its smooth operation and seamless flow for participating schools, resulting in a memorable day for all competitors.



Grade 2/3 Go Exploring *At the Massey Area Museum*

Students in Grade 2/3 travelled to the Massey Area Museum on October 21 as part of a history/social studies field trip. Supported by classroom teachers and educational assistants, as well as Allen Toulouse, Sagamok Historical Researcher, students tumbled excitedly out of the bus upon arrival. After a quick exploration of the outdoor signs and artifacts, students filed through the main entrance. They were greeted with a whole new world once they stepped inside the museum, but also a familiar one, as they discovered historical displays featuring Sagamok and Anishnawbek culture.

The Museum hosts were excellent with the students, greeting them warmly and welcoming them to explore the museum, while also reminding them to be respectful of the irreplaceable artifacts. The large class was soon divided into three smaller groups to more easily maneuver about the museum and allow young learners to really get up close and personal with the exhibits in separate areas. There are two floors to the Massey Museum, so the groups were able to locate to an individual starting area and then rotate through to the other sections.

The Sagamok Anishnawbek room piqued the interest of students as they recognized just how long their community has existed and that the history and Anishnawbek culture is honoured through the museum's preservation methods. Portraits of the Owls, historical newspaper articles about a Sagamok member catching a record-setting fish, along with 3D creations of wigwams, quill boxes, and smudge bowls, were all showcased in their own room as you first entered the display areas. This experience helped students to self-identify as they saw themselves (and perhaps relatives, too!) reflected in the photograph's faces, as well as in artifacts used by their ancestors right from this very location so long ago.

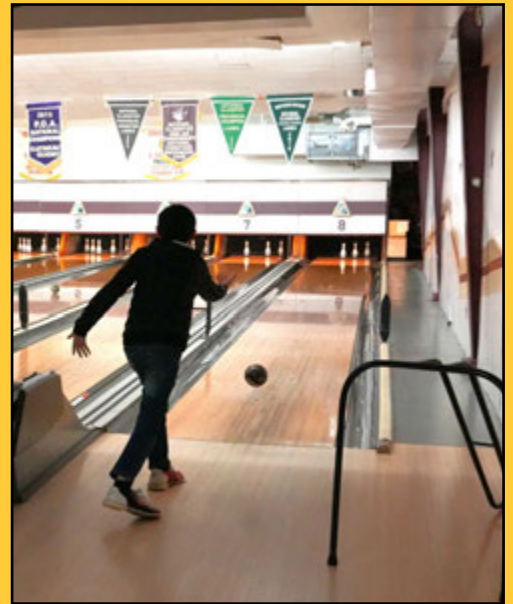


Allen was on hand to offer more detailed information to students about some of the artifacts as they explored and started formulating questions. He mentioned to students as they wandered through the exhibits, that some of the museum's artifacts were shared with them by Sagamok, as a means of preserving and protecting priceless pieces, while also enabling more people to learn about Sagamok and its place in the region's development, history, and culture.

Other rooms in the museum exhibited local historical artifacts from the Fur Trade, an old schoolhouse setting, a local residence with its era bedroom furnishings, a mercantile store, local lumber and mining industries and their historical value on the region. Anything that depicts the region's past stories are all attractively displayed as one would have experienced them in the late 1800s or early 1900s. It is like stepping back in time and well worth a visit if you have not been yet! The Massey Area Museum has done an amazing job of collecting, preserving, researching, and exhibiting objects which help illustrate the settlement and development of the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers and Sagamok Anishnawbek. The museum was founded in 1968 and contains artifacts and exhibits from before that year. The museum strongly supports the sentiment that "understanding local heritage is necessary to gain a better appreciation of community, province, and nation." Following the visit by Biidaaban students, it is hoped that they too will have felt more recognized, understood, and appreciated as a vital and prominent part of

this area's history and development of what is now enjoyed by many.





The Sunshine Room Goes Bowling!

On Friday, November 28, the Sunshine Room visited Espanola! The classroom crew, their teachers, education assistants (EAs), and parent volunteers, travelled to Venture Lanes 5-Pin Bowling Alley on Mead Boulevard. Catherine Drouin and her husband Don have owned and operated Venture Lanes since 2015, but she remarked that the lanes have been in Espanola since the early 60s. The bowling alley underwent some recent renovations and updates, including replacing the manual score system with newly automated scorekeepers and bowling pin reset. Catherine said it sure beats her having to run down the lane to fix pins that land oddly, block the ball return, or worse, delay the play! The scorekeeping system keeps track of points automatically for players, indicates the next player by flashing their name on the board, keeps players honest, and is very user-friendly! These features helped the Sunshine Class know who was on deck next, helped them learn about bowling etiquette, and tallied the scores for them, all to keep things *'bowling'* along! The classroom teacher, Michelle Lajeunesse, beamed proudly at her students' achievements and all the evident fun they were having! It is a favourite outing for her class, she shared, and one she has organized for several years now. The sport of bowling has many benefits for the students, including enhancing balance, coordination, mind-body connection, name and number recognition, and the mathematics required for

scorekeeping. They also build on social skills through taking turns, being patient, working as a team, and successfully knocking over the pins. The entire experience builds character and confidence! “The kids are excited to be here and participating,” exclaimed Michelle, surrounded by smiling students’ faces and hugs from some of them in between frames.

Inclusive of everyone, Venture Lanes has a tool called a ‘wheelchair ramp’. It is portable and can be moved from lane to lane easily to assist students who need extra support coordinating ball delivery, balancing, and with strength limitations. This device offers inclusivity and ensures all people can participate in the wonderful sport of bowling. By placing the ball at the top of the ramp and releasing it, the ball rolls down the ramp, gaining enough momentum to travel down the alley and knock down pins. The ramp can be moved to help bowlers target a different area of the lane/knock down pins standing in that area. Catherine placed gutter guards up on this occasion to allow students more fun, focusing on knocking down pins instead of potentially guttering the ball. Catherine mentioned that a printed score sheet from the morning’s games would be sent back with Miss Michelle so she and students could revisit their results in further detail back in the classroom.

Finishing up the morning at Venture Lanes, lunchtime was on the horizon, and students and staff were gearing up to go to McDonalds for a sit-down lunch of “chicken nuggets” and “cheeseburgers” [according to the excited students]. Michelle mentioned that “by going out to McDonald’s” [which the kids love, and all voted on] they get to work on independently ordering their own food and using their own money to pay for it. They also learn about appropriate behaviour when out in public spaces, using bus transportation to travel to/from destinations -- all of which are key learning skills for our classroom.”

Miigwech to Michelle, the EA’s Alvina, Shayla, and Allanah, and to all the parent volunteers; Isaac, Santana, and Heather, for giving the Sunshine Room students a fun-filled, memorable outing, and learning experience involving transferrable life skills.

Specialized Skill & Talent CALLOUT

If you have a specialized skill, talent, or ability in cultural activities, crafts, or knowledge, **we are looking for YOU!**

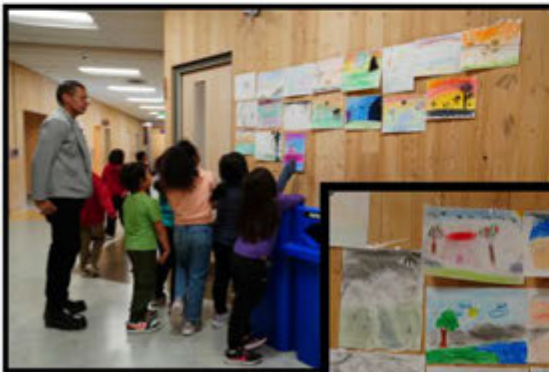
Ask Allison Abitong about joining our **resource directory** for workshops and demonstrations at Biidaaban.

705-865-2421 Ext. 942 | abitonga@biidaabanschool.ca

Venture Lanes offers a Youth Bowling Club (YBC) for kids aged 4 to 19, once per week on Saturdays at 10:30am. You are welcome to join anytime throughout the year, but generally the club begins right after Labour Day in September and goes on until April/May. Contact Catherine or Don for more information at 705-869-2450 or text 705-665-6620. It is a great way to have fun, encourage a healthy lifestyle, and meet new friends. Of course they also offer opportunities for adults in a league setting, or for recreation for anyone, anytime to get out and enjoy the sport of bowling.



Biidaaban Junior Girls hosted a Volleyball tournament on December 8. They are pictured here playing a game against Birch Island's team and the scoreboard looks very favourable for our Eagles! Primary and Junior teams from Biidaaban also competed in Nuke'Em Volleyball in Elliot Lake later the same week.



Student artwork decorates the halls and walls and catches the eye of appreciative admirers.



Sledding fun has begun! Thanks to an early snowfall and cold temperatures, a thick layer of snow formed on the Biidaaban playground which made for some fun recess breaks for students the past few weeks!!



Biidaaban After School Programs

Monday

CREATIVE WRITING CLUB

w/ Stephanie Sonnenburg.



Monday

ARCHERY

w/Mike & Kevin L.
(15 Max.)

Tuesday

STEAM

w/Brendan & Chelsea
(15 Max.)



Tuesday

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

Gr.4's and up.
w/Mark

HOMEWORK CLUB

w/Kevin M.



CHESS CLUB

w/Constance

Wednesday

ANISHNAABEMOWIN

w/Amanda & Mike



Thursday

ROCK BAND

w/Kara
(10 Max)



Thursday

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Gr.6's and Up
w/Laura

Sign up and join the fun!



Lifelong Learning Centre



Community Service Hours

40 HOURS

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT!

How Can I Do 40 Hours of Community Service?
When you're finished at school last Friday this month for the school year?
Grades 9 & 10: 40 hours
Grades 11 & 12: 60 hours
Grades 13 & 14: 80 hours
There are many service organizations and community events that you can get help for. We have a special service or activity list. We can help you find a match.
A message from Life-Long Learning Centre.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

We Need You Here!

When you miss 2 days a month
you miss 20 days a year
you miss 136 hours a year
you miss 8,160 minutes a year

That's 272 episodes of your favourite show, and **we miss you!**

MEN'S & WOMEN'S

Mitt Making with Linda



FEBRUARY 4 | 5-8PM
Lifelong Learning Centre

Limited to 12 participants!
For more info and to register, visit:
www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com

Warm Hat & Mitts Drive

Warm hats and mitts were needed for the students and staff members who volunteered their time on the evening of December 3, from 4-7pm. Sagamok students attending Espanola High School, along with Guidance & Career Coach, Josephine Toulouse, and Indigenous Student Support Worker, Karen Boyer, withstood the cold weather conditions to host a Warm Hat & Mitts Drive outside of the MEC. Their purely volunteer effort was given out of the goodness of these women's hearts. We commend them for wanting to improve the lives of fellow community members! By providing free, brand-new hats and mitts for children, teens, and adults, they are ensuring both the comfort and the safety of others. And all the while enduring a frigid winter night and giving up their free time. Kudos and Chi Miigwech to you all!

Several bins full of hats and mitts were collected, all donations made by Sagamok community and staff members. Josephine Toulouse commented that "some were handmade mittens and hats, and suitable for different age groups. The students were wonderful helpers collecting the items and also setting up and taking down the tables. Students wore festive hats and played festive music throughout the evening. We had a pizza supper [for volunteers] and had hot chocolate and herbal tea available. We had a few community members come and grab some mitts and hats during the collection." This made their effort personal, meaningful, and full circle. We hope this event will serve to warm the hearts of those involved, those who donated, and those who will receive items. Hat and mitt items will be available at various locations within Sagamok for those in need.



Students can gain valuable volunteer hours for assisting at events like these; 40 hours are required to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Students in Grade 8 can get a head start on earning volunteer hours prior to starting high school! Many local functions and departments serving the community could use your help! Plus, you meet some amazing volunteers and make positive connections. You just never know how they will benefit you on your life's path.

If you are curious about how/when/where you can volunteer, please reach out to Josephine at 705-865-2421 or by email:

Toulouse_josephine@sagamok.ca

Lunch & Learn at EHS

Cannabis and Vaping

On Monday, November 24, a Lunch & Learn was held in the auditorium at Espanola High School (EHS). The presentation was a collaboration between Education's Sagamok Student Support Services and the Community Wellness Department's Mental Health & Addictions team for the National Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week (NAAAW), which took place from November 24-28.



Josephine Toulouse, Guidance & Career Coach for Sagamok Education, arranged the presentation. It provided information about the subjects of Vaping & Cannabis, prevention of use, personal safety and wellbeing, including providing facts on the contents in both substances, the adverse effects on the brain/body, and options on how to quit using these substances if a student chooses

to. Karen Boyer (Indigenous Support Worker), Darlene McNaughton (Sagamok's Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario Lead), and Tracey Stoneypoint (LLC Guidance & Career Coach), were all available to answer questions or comments from students and provide additional guidance.

Alicia Topp, Tobacco Wise Lead from The Indigenous Tobacco Program, facilitated the presentation to students over their lunch break. A fresh Subway lunch was provided to everyone who attended, proving very popular with the students! The information provided empowered youth to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing, based on culturally appropriate, respectful, and evidence-informed data.

The workshop engaged youth in a short-term memory game of Connect 4, which required participants to wear 'green goggles' that rendered them 'colour blind' and to play solely by memory to achieve four checkers in a row. The activity demonstrated the adverse effects that vaping and cannabis can have on our memory, and how they impact motor skills, perception, coordination, depth perception, and good judgment. "Your brain is critical to protect!"

stated Alicia, "How do we use our brain/short-term memory in daily life?" she asked students to consider.

Alicia also provided 3-D props to demonstrate the effects of vaping and cannabis misuse on a person's lungs, and jars containing the coloured dyes and ingredients used by the vape industry for students to see/smell/understand. Companies that produce cannabis/vapes use addictive ingredients in



their products and use colours/scents that are familiar [often resembling colours/scents of candy] to attract the youth population. Manufacturers tend to use cool logos and packaging, but do not list all the ingredients they contain. Some of the harmful ingredients in vape products include formaldehyde, diacetone alcohol, soap ingredients, acetone, and excessive quantities of nicotine.

The Lunch & Learn provided useful, applicable content for students to consider for both their current health and future wellbeing. It also offered evidence-based information that students can feel confident using to make informed decisions, rather than relying on random searches that might leave them with more questions or confusion about the



authenticity of the information found online. Miigwech to Alicia for facilitating this informative session, to Josephine for organizing the event, and to all the assisting staff members for their dedication to being present for our youth and for helping with pathways to support.

Meet Anna Bourcier

Our NEW Waawaasnoode Adult Learning Centre Teacher



My name is Anna Bourcier, and I am your new Waawaasnoode Adult Learning Centre (WALC) teacher! I am an OCT (Ontario College of Teachers) certified teacher, with English, History, and Family Studies as my specialist subjects. I am here to help you along your educational journey! At the WALC, you can:

- Complete PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) courses
- Register for/Complete ILC (Independent Learning Centre) credit courses towards a diploma
- Work on school assignments and homework with teacher support
- Meet with Rainbow District staff to discuss your OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma) and options available to you
- Access the internet/complete assignments with our computers and laptops
- Find out about training and job opportunities

The WALC is open daily at the following times:

Monday - 9:00am-3:00pm
Tuesday - 9:00am-3:00pm
Wednesday - 1:00pm-8:00pm
Thursday - 9:00am-3:00pm
Friday - 9:00am-3:00pm

The Waawaasnoode Adult Learning Centre is located within the Lifelong Learning Centre at 717 Sagamok Road. If you have any questions or would like to access the facilities to get started on or continue your education, give Anna a call at 705-865-2421, or drop by the classroom anytime during business hours. The classroom and computer labs are available to use to help you complete your education requirements, and Anna is available to provide direction on courses, content, and assignments.

Heavy Equipment Operator Screening

On Site at the LLC in Partnership with Origin

On October 21 and 22, Nicole Sangster, Finance Coordinator at the Lifelong Learning Centre, organized a Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Simulated Training session. The opportunity for Heavy Equipment Operator Screening, conducted by Origin, a company based out of Thunder Bay and 100% Indigenous-owned, was organized and conducted onsite at the LLC in a mobile trailer just outside the building.

Randy Moore, Origin HEO Screener, has been coming to Sagamok for a couple days annually for the past three years. This year's program has 10 individuals confirmed for the screening over the two-day session, with a few more potentially registering last minute. The screening is by appointment only because the simulator trailer only has room to accommodate one to two registrants at a time, plus the instructor. Registrants switch between different simulators during the designated time slot. There are three simulators in the mobile trailer: excavator, loader, and rock truck (dump truck). Each 'HEO Screening' tests the applicants for aptitude, interest level, skill/ability. Randy assesses whether the applicant is a good fit based on these criteria.



Applicants are tested on the three simulators for 45 minutes each. Randy observes how they handle the various machines, who is interested or has natural talent, and he addresses any questions the applicants may have. Based on a positive assessment during the training period, he recommends that the applicant move forward and receive additional education / full training in the area where they have demonstrated the best fit. Origin has programs in place for government grants called 'Operation Innovation', whereby they partner with Employment and Training centres, for example, Sagamok's Lifelong Learning Centre, and together they will fund the individual to go and get their training and full certification.

Full-time training/certification is between 6 and 8 weeks! Students train on four machines for two weeks. Some classroom/book work is required to cover safety, familiarity with the equipment, and proper terminology (shop talk), but primarily the training consists of practical, hands-on training. Randy indicated specialized certification, and training has taken place right here in Sagamok and 'depending on where the eligible students are located this determines the location chosen for the certification sessions -- possibly Manitoulin or Sagamok -- and what training facilities are available at the time to allow them to host.' When asked about the statistics on the number of successful candidates who move forward towards certification, Randy offered that 'approximately 100 individuals sign up for the Screening days, and 25 of those perform strongly

enough to move forward. Those 25 individuals are made an offer to receive the training opportunity/have it funded, of which 12-13 typically accept the placement/training. Usually, about 7 or 8 individuals complete the training. So, every year, about 7-8% of applicants successfully achieve full certification and can be gainfully employed in the role of Heavy Equipment Operator!

For more information about the next time the HEO Screening will be coming to the Lifelong Learning Centre, or for details about the program and funding opportunities available for this specialized training, contact Nicole Sangster at 705-865-2421, or any of the Guidance & Career Coaches; available to assist you on the pathway to becoming a certified Heavy Equipment Operator through Origin.




Secondary & Post Secondary Services
including application and funding support

Waawaasnoode | Adult Education
Instructor support | Learning space | Computer lab
(attain your Ontario Secondary School Diploma)

Indigenous Skills Employment Training Program (ISETp)
including application and funding opportunities

Guidance & Career Coaches, Resume & Cover Letter assistance, Aptitude Research, Sponsorship, Personal or Professional Development Programs



Education Supports



Student Mental Wellness *Bullying Awareness Initiative Update*

Since the 2025-2026 school year began in September, many milestones have been achieved regarding the Bullying Awareness Initiative that the Education Department has designated a priority focus. Here are some of the accomplishments made in the past four months through collaborative efforts between leadership of Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik and Raven Hammond, the Student Mental Wellness Specialist:

- Development of survey for staff, students, and teachers to participate in monthly as a means of recording instances of bullying, resolution, and follow-up support obtained -- fully implemented since start of new school year,
- Equip staff and students with proper processes and awareness of bullying and reporting options to be able to record instances of bullying,
- The recorded information was used to track and evaluate instances, and develop appropriate preventative measures,
- Extensive collaboration between Biidaaban, Education Leadership, and the Student Mental Wellness Specialist to develop solutions based on findings/reports,

Notable improvements in Biidaaban staff and students' bullying awareness, including:

- Increase in student willingness to report,
- Staff handling of reporting information becoming more consistent; processes developed and implemented,
- Better indication of bullying styles and locations of where bullying takes place,
- Strengthening of staff/student trust.

In May of 2025, Dr. Wendy Craig, a Professor at the Department of Psychology at Queen's University, was hired to assess the bullying occurrences at Biidaaban and provide evidence-based recommendations to Sagamok Education leadership. From this report, a strategic plan to address bullying in the education department, was derived. Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist, has been responsible for implementing all the recommendations contained within Dr. Craig's report, specific to our community's needs. She has been using Dr. Craig's report as a guideline for the first half of the school year and is now stepping into implementing Phase 2 of the report which includes:

- implementation of programs and supports applicable to survey results recorded since September,
- Biidaaban is preparing to reintroduce the WITS Program beginning in January 2026

WITS stands for Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help. It is "A program created by educators for educators to help children prevent victimization such as bullying, discrimination, and lateral violence. For children ages 4-12, it gives them the tools to manage conflicts and empowers them." www.witsprogram.ca. Through the program, students will be provided with reference materials, books, information handouts, posters, etc. Students will be reminded to "use *their WITS!*" to address bullying in the classroom and the school.

Miigwech to Raven and Education Leadership for making bullying awareness a priority and for providing resources, training, and processes available to combat bullying in our education system.

Student Mental Wellness

Duty to Report Presentation in Partnership with Nogdawindamin

An educational presentation by Facilitator, Jo-Anne Bumbacco, of the Sault Ste. Marie Nogdawindamin chapter, was delivered to the community on November 20 from 1-3pm at the Lifelong Learning Centre. The information session was open to anyone in the community interested in learning about the Duty to Report and how it is everyone's personal obligation to report abuse. The presentation was one of several initiatives Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist for Sagamok Education, organized as part of a week-long campaign broaching the subject of Bullying Awareness and offering information on prevention measures. This presentation was a collaborative effort between Sagamok Education and the Community Wellness Department (CWD).



"If you witness, you know, or you hear about bullying, you have a legal obligation to report!" This was the opening remark emphasized by Jo-Anne. The message it carried was a powerful one. As citizens of both Sagamok and Ontario, we all have a responsibility and the opportunity to prevent abuse. Jo-Anne went on to say that her presentation is delivered as a good reminder to community members and staff that you must report abusive behaviour if you have reasonable grounds to believe that a child/person is being neglected or abused (physically or psychologically) and that you are legally obligated to

do so. Employees working within the child/family welfare system are mandated to report suspicions of abuse. They can face a \$5000 fine if they do not report, and their license can be revoked. When welfare authorities receive your information, it is treated confidentially, and they assist with navigating and determining the necessary resources and support services to access based on the situation. It is their duty to do so.

Bullying awareness and abuse prevention requires us all to stand up, speak up, and act upon our instincts to report and help stop the continued threat or abuse someone may be facing in our community. It is not in anyone's best interest, for the safety of yourself or the victim, to intervene personally; the safest and recommended course of action is to contact the appropriate authorities to deal with the situation. "Reasonable grounds" does not require proof of a bullying/abuse/neglectful situation, but rather a solid suspicion based on our best judgement that potential abuse is taking place. You are required by law to report it.

Raven said that the event was well received by participants and attended by 28 people "November 20 is recognized as National Child Day and it was quite appropriate that the presentation was delivered today -- tying in well with our Bullying Awareness and prevention campaign -- but also providing a timely lead up to National Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week (NAAAW) being hosted by the CWD the week of November 24-28. "It was wonderful to see employees from the Family and Community Support Services Department



in attendance, and members from the Mental Health & Addictions team,” Raven noted. She said the information shared through this session is important and pertinent to everyone in the community whether you’re a child or an adult. “We all have a legal obligation as citizens to report to child/adult welfare authorities if we have reasonable grounds/concerns for a person’s well-being and safety. It doesn’t matter if you’re a janitor, nurse, auntie, parent, teacher, community representative, coach, club leader – you must report any suspicious activity, patterns of abuse or neglect, indicating the safety and well-being of a person is compromised.” Miigwech Jo-Anne for providing this presentation to the community, and miigwech Raven, for helping to organize this informative session during Bullying Awareness week.

If you suspect abuse/neglect/bullying (psychological and/or physical), you can contact Nogdawindamin at 1-800-465-0999 or visit their website at www.nog.ca, and report it. It is your duty, and you may save someone from further harm, trauma, or serious injury. If you missed this session of ‘Duty to Report’, the presentation may be revisiting Sagamok again in the spring. Contact Raven Hammond at 705-865-2421 for more information or if you have suggestions regarding information or training sessions you would like to see brought to the Education Department.



Raven's Reminders

November

‘Grief and Loss’

Grief is a natural response to losing someone or something meaningful in our lives, but it can be a complicated and deeply personal process. Everyone grieves differently, and there is no "right" way to experience loss.

It's important to allow yourself to feel your emotions and seek support from others, whether through therapy, support groups, or simply talking to friends and family.

Compassionate self-care, patience, and time are key as you process the stages of grief and navigate your healing journey.

Raven Hammond, BSW, RSW.
Student Mental Wellness Specialist
Education Department
Sagamok Anishnawbek

C: (705) 863-0883





Urban Sewing Class

SUDBURY
January 16, 17, 18

SAULT STE. MARIE
February 6, 7, 8

*Open to Sagamok
Members living in
Sault Ste. Marie*

705-863-0814 | bob_dulcie@sagamok.ca

Registration Required

SafeTALK *Suicide Prevention Training for Everyone*

The Sagamok Mental Health and Addictions Manager, Wanda Clayton, along with Darlene McNaughton, Youth Wellness Hubs of Ontario Lead, hosted a training session on September 23 at the Lifelong Learning Center. They were supported by Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist with Sagamok Education. The training, called SafeTALK, is an evidence-based program providing certification upon completion. It centers around providing people with practical information and the skills needed to support someone who is suicidal or contemplating suicide. SafeTALK provides training to help individuals – whether that be a community member, a teacher, or an employee – recognize the signs of someone who may be considering suicide and be able to help the individual by connecting them with appropriate services to support their ongoing safety.



The workshop was facilitated by certified trainer, Lisa Carricato, who has provided this training in Sagamok over the past number of years. Lisa stated that she has taught the program for over 15 years and delivers it to hockey players, professionals, teachers, students, those working with adults/Elders with mental health concerns, and more. Lisa has worked with Maamwesying for

the past 4 years and is routinely invited to many communities as our community is not alone in the effects or risks of suicide.

Lisa engaged with attendees asking for a show of hands, “Who here has taken a first aid/CPR Course? Are you a doctor, paramedic, nurse, or specialist in that field? No! We are all just everyday citizens. All you need to be is a caring individual who wants to help someone who may be struggling emotionally and be able to recognize someone who needs mental health support or is in danger of suicide.”



SafeTALK provides tools to ‘everyday folks’ so they can be comfortable having discussions openly about mental health and confident about linking a person who may be struggling with the appropriate resources to help them through.

The program is called SafeTALK because Safe stands for Suicide Alertness For Everyone and TALK stands for Tell, Act, Listen, Knowledge. Tell someone if you are struggling, or on the flip side, be able to recognize the invitation to talk about mental health matters when someone approaches you. Lisa shared the sentiment, “We should all be concerned about suicide because it affects everyone in the community. We all need to make sure our community is safe”. “An important message to take away from today,” she added, “is that many people have had thoughts of suicide. It’s about being human and about being in pain.”

SafeTALK training empowers us to connect someone having thoughts of suicide to appropriate services, provide intervention, and re-direct that

person to available supports. Lisa went on to coach that we need to make a conscious shift from 'suicide prevention' to 'life promotion' and truly acknowledge how all life is sacred. Some of the key indicators to pay attention to of someone in distress/struggling emotionally are:

- Body language,
- Changes in personality,
- Elusiveness, non-committal,
- Doesn't make eye contact,
- Mannerisms not characteristic of themselves.

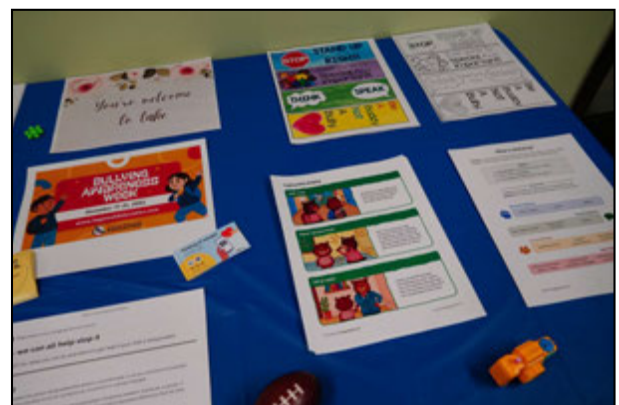
The program was well received, very informative, and remained respectful of the sensitive nature of the topic. Chi miigwech to Lisa for delivering this meaningful training and encouraging open discussion surrounding suicide. The SafeTALK program helped inform and train attendees to recognize signs of suicidal thoughts, and how to act upon these signs to help keep our communities safe.

Student Mental Wellness Information Station!



Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist for Sagamok Education, is pictured here at an information station located outside of her office in the Lifelong Learning Centre. Raven has put together some information pamphlets, activities for families, contact information for mental wellness service providers, books, and fidget toys -- all available to help community members find appropriate resources and pathways to mental wellness support services.

Anyone is welcome to visit the Wellness Information Station and take the resources that interest them. Drop by and say 'Aanii!' to Raven if you are visiting the resource table and find out about other great wellness programs she is planning to support you/your student(s)/and staff on your wellness journeys.



Thinking About Your Future?

Come Meet with a Guidance & Career Coach at the Lifelong Learning Centre!

**OPEN MON-FRI
8:30AM - 4:00PM**

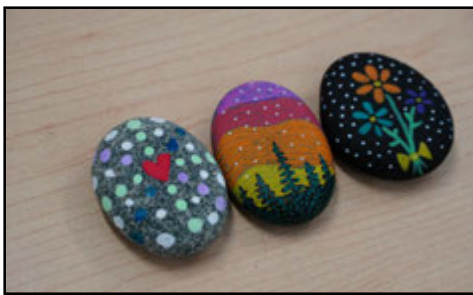
Career Assessment • Post Secondary Funding • Presentations • Resumes

705-865-2421 X 928
717 Sagamok Road

Student Mental Wellness

Making Memory Stones with the EHS Ravens Program

"Grief is a normal part of life; it's an emotion we all experience, and a normal response to loss." This was the message delivered by Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist for Sagamok Education, at her recent visit to The Ravens classroom at Espanola High School. The Ravens Program, led by teacher, Zach Beamish, is an alternative learning pathway designed to support FNMI students through hands-on, culturally grounded experiences. Learners earn credits while engaging in outdoor education, visual arts, and projects that explore the history and richness of Indigenous cultures. The program blends land-based learning, physical activity, and creative expression to build confidence, skills, and community connection, all through meaningful, real-world learning.



Raven Hammond visits The Ravens program every few weeks, providing information and materials to aid in the discussion of various topics surrounding mental wellness. In previous visits she has provided students with information, coping tools/strategies, and resources about facing change, mindfulness, gratitude, and more. On this visit (December 4), the topic being discussed was Grief. It is particularly applicable this time of year, when many people grieve the passing of loved ones, missing their presence not only in their daily lives, but also mourning their absence during Christmas festivities. Raven knows it is important to give students an outlet for discussing grief openly and learning coping strategies. While she offered information in a casual round-table discussion, students were provided with acrylic paint markers and a smooth river rock, to create a memory stone of their own design. The creative process served as a means of healing, teaching students about being present in the moment, and providing support to fellow classmates through connection and social interaction.

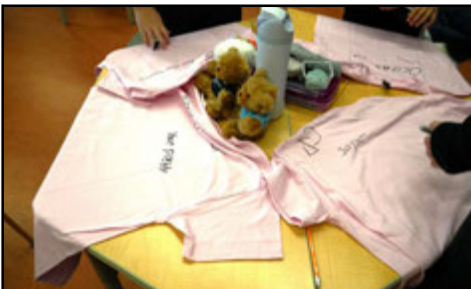
Raven went on to also explain how grief is not always associated with death. Grief can be experienced when a student moves from Grade 8 to Grade 9, leaving behind familiar friends, teachers, and school environments. Raven was supported by the Community Wellness Department Youth Mental Health

Worker, Allison Owl, who was on hand for students who needed or wanted extra support from a Mental Health Professional.

The memory stones reflected each person's individuality and were unique, colourful, whimsical, and meaningful. Miigwech to Mr. Beamish for creating space in The Ravens Program to accommodate discussions and activities such as these and supporting students by increasing their emotional resiliency and capacity to deal with difficult emotions/situations such as grief, with a goal of better understanding themselves and others -- building up compassion, empathy, and awareness.

Student Mental Wellness *Pink Shirt Day in Collaboration with FCSS*

Sagamok's Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Department provides Pink Shirt Day activity November 17 at Daycare and November 19 at Biidaaban, as part of a collaborative effort with Sagamok Education Department's Student Mental Wellness Specialist, Raven Hammond, regarding a weeklong campaign highlighting Bullying Awareness within the community. Raven organized activities throughout the week encompassing Daycare, Biidaaban, Espanola High School and Lifelong Learning Centre, as well as the Elders Eagle Lodge, providing a fulsome coverage of information pertaining to bullying awareness and prevention measures.



Student Mental Wellness

Bullying Awareness Week

Nov 17-21, 2025

Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist, held a week of information laden activities for students, staff, family members, and community members. The intention was to provide opportunities to deepen understanding about bullying, learn ways we can combat negative actions, and promote kindness and inclusivity with the outcome being improved mental wellness.

Over the course of the week, Daycare, Biidaaban, Lifelong Learning Center, and the Elders Eagle Lodge, participated in specialized activities offering a chance for engagement by/ with students and staff, personal involvement, professional development, and awareness-building. The following are the key activities that took place:

- Parent Information booth at Biidaaban November 17 – provided information handouts about recognizing the signs and effects of bullying and ideas on prevention measures or sources to access regarding assistance if someone is being bullied. Raven's booth and parent information session also served as a 'Meet 'n Greet' to introduce her new position within the Education department;



- T-Shirt Making with Elders from the Elders Eagle Lodge – an interactive opportunity for Elders and students from the Daycare and Biidaaban to engage and provide support to each other through conversation, shared stories, smiles, and hugs. The activity encouraged understanding and healthy relationships;
- Darian Jones, Deanna Southwind, and Natasha Southwind, from the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) department, brought in t-shirts bearing a logo opposing bullying. They delivered the shirts to each classroom and facilitated an exercise whereby students were invited to move around their classrooms and share/ write a positive message or sign their name on the t-shirt of their peers. Once completed, everyone wore their t-shirt to proudly demonstrate anti-bullying and the support we can offer each other through simple gestures of kindness like this activity;
- Pink Shirt Day was held on November 19 at Daycare and Biidaaban -- students/ staff wore pink to recognize that bullying behaviours have no place in our school or community, and the need to provide care, wellness, and supportive measures towards bullying prevention. The importance of mindfulness towards others was also highlighted;
- 'Duty to Report' presentation by a Nogdawindamin representative, was offered on November 20 to the community and all staff, to learn more about the obligation we all have to report abuse/ suspected abuse including neglect;
- Also on Nov 20, a Mini Powwow hosted by Child Wellness Workers from FCSS, Darian and Deanna, recognized National

Child Day, and offered an opportunity for children, families, and community members to engage in a cultural event in the spirit of personal well-being; and

- An Information Station regarding mental wellness holds a variety of helpful information and is now permanently located at the LLC outside Raven's office. It includes pamphlets and take-aways.

For interest, Bullying Awareness Week was also acknowledged in the same week by the Rainbow District School Board, including Espanola High School students, in an effort towards building more awareness around the subject of bullying and prevention measures.

In conclusion, following the week-long Bullying Awareness campaign, Raven expressed that she was "pleased with the response she received from various departments in Sagamok, who offered activities to support Bullying Awareness and focus on wellness remedies surrounding inclusivity and kindness." Many people were involved with the campaign which Raven is very grateful for, "Chi Miigwech", and she was "really happy with the turnout, support, kindness, and willingness of all to broach the subject of bullying and provide a space to promote kindness, wellness, and more positive mental health measures in the spaces everyone shares and occupies throughout Education and in the community."



Raven's Reminders

December

'Mindfulness'

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present in the moment, which can greatly reduce stress and increase emotional well-being. By focusing on your breath, sensations, and thoughts without judgment, you can develop a greater awareness of your body and mind. Simple activities like mindful breathing, body scans, or mindful walking can help individuals ground themselves in the present moment.

This practice not only enhances self-awareness but also fosters resilience in the face of challenges, making it an essential tool for mental wellness.

Raven Hammond, BSW, RSW.
Student Mental Wellness Specialist
Education Department
Sagamok Anishnawbek

C: (705) 863-0883



Literacy

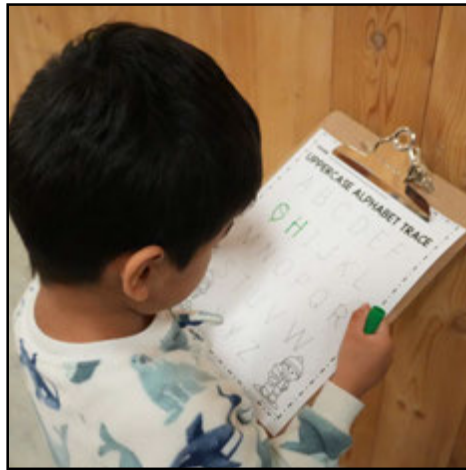
Family Literacy Showcase Success!

Aanii from the Literacy Resource Teacher, Ms. Sonny,

As a team, the Education Department has been looking for more ways to involve the community in our school activities and decided to start holding a literacy event every other month. Next month, we will be having a Numeracy event happening at the school! We are doing this in the hopes that more caregivers will be coming to the school regularly and getting involved in literacy and numeracy at home as well. These events are meant to show caregivers the types of simple yet fun activities and games that they can play at home to support literacy and numeracy outside of the school day.

Today we held our first Family Literacy Showcase Event. We had a group of caregivers join us for some fun packed activities from our Early Learning classes all the way to Grade 8. Teachers planned some very interactive activities from Letter and Sound Scavenger hunts to Word Building games like; Scrabble, Word Finds, and BananaGrams; to sentence writing activities, finding antonyms, and creating their own stories. Students were very engaged in every class and seemed to be having a lot of fun. There was something different and interactive happening in each classroom! Thank you so much to the parents that came to join in the fun, it is always very meaningful for our students to share their learning with You.

Here are a few photos from the first Family Literacy Showcase!



If you have questions about how you can support literacy and numeracy more at home, please reach out to one of our excellent team members who would love to help you.

Literacy Resource Teacher:
Stephanie Sonnenburg
(Ms. Sonny)

705-865-2387 EXT: 757

sonnenburgs@biidaabanschool.ca

Numeracy Resource Teacher:
Mark Aizenberg

705-865-2387 EXT: 116

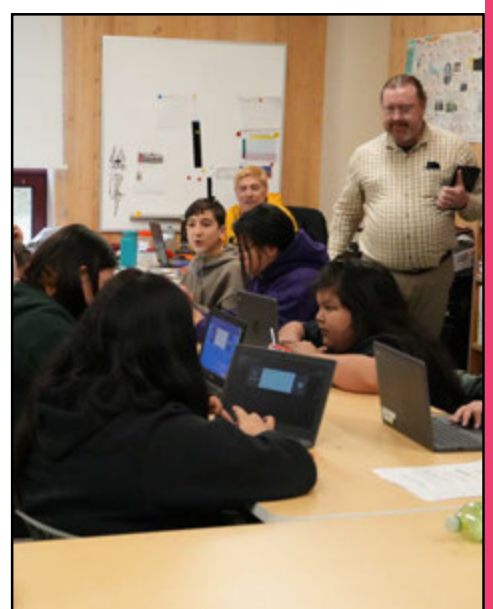
aizenbergm@biidaabanschool.ca

Special Education Resource Teacher:

Lindsay Lefebvre

705-865-2387 EXT: 772

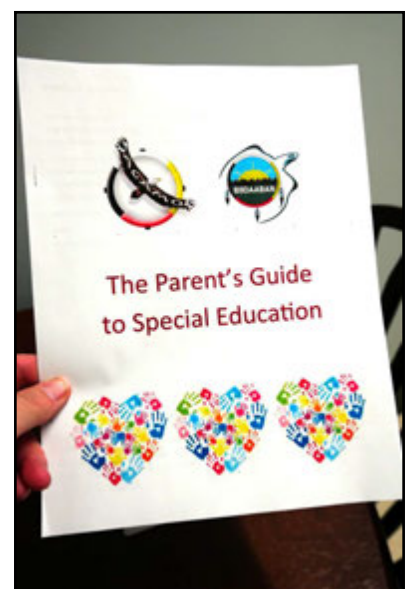
lefebvre@biidaabanschool.ca



Special Education *Parent Handbook Update*

The Parent Handbook for students of Biidaaban, has now been finalized. Biidaaban parents will have received a digital copy of the Parent Handbook via the school messenger service, Power School. Printed copies are available at the Lifelong Learning Centre. Contact Allison Abitong, Principal of Student Support Services, at 705-865-2421 or abitong_allison@sagamok.ca for more details.

Miigwech to all of the Sagamok Education Staff and Committee members who were involved with the development of this handbook.



A note of recognition from Vance McPherson, Director of Education, to all Biidaaban Staff regarding the Literacy Day Showcase...

“On Wednesday, (November 26) I had the pleasure of attending Literacy Day at Biidaaban, and what I witnessed bordered upon the numinous.

My friend Renzo Caron (Director of Justice) and I made our first stop at the end of the Intermediate Hall and Kevin M introduced us, and his class, to a writing app that just looked like a ton of fun. Electricity working in only half of the circuits, the main screen not being one of them, we got to witness the day-to-day resilience of Biidaaban teachers and students.

Kevin was careful to note that the app was Laura’s discovery (you don’t need to be in Biidaaban long to witness the outcomes of professional collaboration), and that was our next stop — a classroom with the projector working but no lights this time — and we saw a class full of attentive, engaged writers. I looked over some of their shoulders. The writing was very good.

Across the hall, Pam’s group was circulating among a half-dozen (!) table-top reading and writing activities, each with its own rules. The kids were engaged and happy. A bit further down, Jay’s group was immersed in an online reading quiz, most students working independently on the task, small line-up at the teacher’s desk for direct assistance. Eric’s scholars were practicing cursive on carefully curated desktop whiteboard templates. I poked my head into EL1 and Kevin L was leading the Gruffalo storytelling, pictures and words projected large, children cloaked in a blanket of words and wordplay from the earliest of ages. The scaffolding, the direct assistance, the collaboration amongst teachers and educational assistants was such a pleasure to see.

We did not get to visit every classroom; I know stories exist three-fold beyond those above. I do want to thank those teachers, EAs, and others who facilitated our classroom visits; I am conscious that classroom visitors, no matter how benign or well-intentioned, are always disruptive, and I appreciate your openness to managing that complexity.

Given that every child was occupied with Literacy Day activity, we did get the rare opportunities to tour a quiet library and a quiet Artistic space. In the library, Skylar updated us on the progress of the book vending machine and our progress towards building a library in every home in Sagamok. In the art room, Brendan showed us brilliant wire sculptures that some of the senior students had crafted — making the link between fine motor skills, on epidemic decline but so critical for writing, and such tactile activities that build such skills back stronger.

We all know how critical literacy is to success in today’s world, and interestingly, it doesn’t matter much how we define success. These students will be Sagamok’s political leaders, poring over policy and negotiated IBAs, or they will be business leaders, keeping current with market trends and opportunities, or they will be tradespeople, staying up-to-date on best practices and building SOPs, or they will be professionals, consuming and contributing to the body of knowledge in their chosen careers, or, most crucially, they will be the bearers of Sagamok’s language and culture, and they will be brilliant communicators of their wisdom beyond this generation. Hopefully some of them will be educators and take on that critical role of helping all others to walk their own paths.

Aapji go miigwech, thank you so much to everyone who helped to celebrate Biidaaban’s culture of Literacy.”

Infrastructure

Daycare Van Shed Construction Update



The Daycare shed construction is getting closer to completion. The structure itself is built and a few of the crew (some too shy for the camera) were onsite putting on some final touches. Pictured is Jackson Linklater, from Nodin Construction, finishing off the exterior siding. Work on the interior is still underway; it requires electrical, lighting, heat, etc., but is getting closer every day to housing the Daycare Van and larger items requiring storage. Clyve Southwind, Owner/Operator of Nodin Construction, reports that the week of December 5th, the electrical should be completed and everything hooked up and ready to go.



Nodin Construction has also been building an Outdoor Cooking Shelter at Biidaaban. Dan Owl reports that this project still requires Clyve's crew to complete work on developing the cook top and enclosing the fire area in concrete/brick. The Cooking Shelter is located near the sea can storage units. Staff will be able to teach students how to prepare food in the outdoors once this project is complete - a wonderful addition to support land-based instruction!

Chi-Miigwech to our Custodians for their commitment to our safety through winter maintenance!

Miigwech to Infrastructure's **Custodians** who maintain the education facilities' sidewalks, parking lots, and driveways by shovelling snow, salting down icy sidewalks, removing snow, and enduring the winter elements -- ensuring staff, students, and families can safely and comfortably enter/exit our buildings!



Land-Based Learning

Quill Dying

Ms. Poirier's Grade 6/7 class learned about dying porcupine quills from Land-Based Lead, Michael Abitong. "Our ancestors talked about how to dye porcupine quills so we're going to learn about that today," Michael started off. He asked the students to begin reflecting on things like:

1. Where do we get the items to dye the quills with? And how do we start?,
2. What do we use the entire porcupine for when we harvest one? and
3. When we start to think about and learn about the land we think what's growing out there? What's happening?
4. When do we harvest a porcupine?



Michael went on to provide some of the answers. He talked about the natural items that ancestors from long ago would gather from the land to dye the quills. "There were no commercial items to purchase back then," said Michael, "and moving forward, the liquid dyes (oxidizing agents used today) were not so easy to get; you had to trade or spend *zhoon'yaa* (money) to get them, and they were very expensive." He explained, "Our people used things found in nature to dye the quills because we used what we had, what was available to us." Michael shared that the colours of the medicine wheel stem from "Indian Corn", considered a food staple helping ancestors to survive in a harsh/tough environment. Michael demonstrated that you could see all four colours throughout the kernels on the cobs; *mskwaa* (red/burgundy), *ozaawaa* (yellow), *waabshkaa* (white), and *mkadewaa* (black/dark purple). He encouraged the students to utilize tools available to them today to continue researching what their ancestors used to do. They can search up on their computers questions like, "How do I dye porcupine quills?" The information varies based on region and communities by what was available and what their practices were/are.

The entire *gok* (porcupine) is put to use; each part serves a purpose. At first, we gather our resources needed and then we need to separate them, shared Michael. The hair on the quills needs to be cleaned away and put in a separate container. Michael presented large bins of harvested porcupine quills to the students' tables, along with a container to put the cleaned quills into and the hair that was removed from the quill into another. The hair is used for regalia, bustles, and dolls – reinforcing with students that 'as Anishinaabe we utilize what we have and what we take from the animal' and we offer tobacco as a thank

you; to honour the animal for the sacrifice it made for us to be able to use it. The quills are used to make regalia, jewellery, storage boxes, gifts, and more. Porcupine meat is a good source of food and easy to capture due to their slow-moving characteristic. The bones are used for making tools, jewellery pieces (long beads), regalia for powwows, and more.

Once cleaned and separated, the quills are put into containers holding different colours of pre-mixed dyes (this is what was available to use today to demonstrate to students how the quill absorbs the coloured dye). This activity of separating the hair from the quills was tedious work, but the students became absorbed in the simple activity, working together quietly, watching their resources grow as the containers began filling up, and the classroom became a tranquil space. As students cleaned the quills together, they explored the smell of the quills and hair. "Smells like fish," one student commented spurring others at the table to also take a whiff. And as enquisitive learners, they tested the sharpness of the quills on their fingertips. Very sharp! Resembling a sewing needle; thin on one end with piercing sharpness, growing larger where the quill attaches to the porcupine, and opening into a hole/tube (where the dye would enter).

The gok is best harvested in late niibin (summer), end of July or August, when the temperature starts changing. When the temperature changes, the porcupine also changes. The colour of its hair and the colour of its quills alter to match the changing landscape. In the ziigwan (spring), the quills have oil inside/around them. The oil comes from the bark/roots/evergreen needles they have eaten all winter, and it offers a protective measure for the porcupine's health. It is not an ideal time to harvest them since the quills are messier to clean.

The learning offered during this study unit was rich in history, culture, and tradition. Students practiced social skills including interaction, teamwork/community, motor skill/coordination exercises, as well as creativity as students determined what colours they could dye the quills, the mixing/dying process, and how the quills might be assembled to create something uniquely from themselves. Miigwech to Michael for sharing his knowledge with the students about the gok and quill dying!

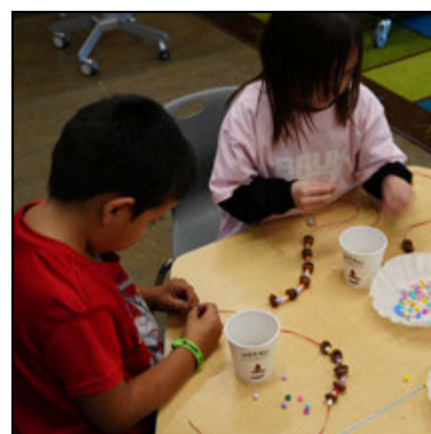
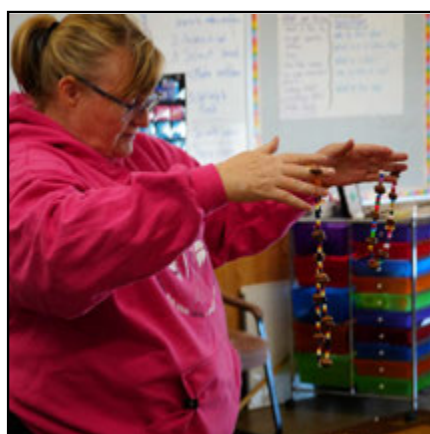


Students received this list of enaandek (colours) in Anishinaabemowin/English as part of their learning:

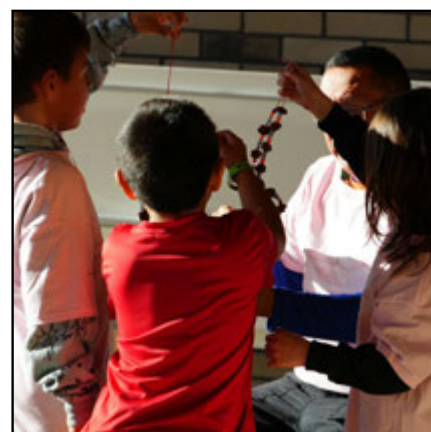
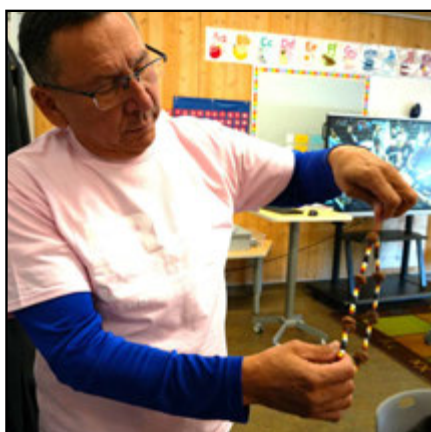
Waabshkaa – White
Mskwaa, Mskwaande – Red
Ozaawaa – Yellow
Ozaawaamiingaande – Orange
Giizhigaande – Light Blue
Miinaande – Blue
Ozhaawshkwaa – Green
Giniiwaande – Pink
Zhoominaande – Purple
Waabaande – Grey
Kiiwaande – Brown
Mkadewaa – Black
Zhoonyaawaande - Silver

Land-Based Learning *Making Acorn Necklaces*

Students gathered acorns (oak cones) as part of Autumn land-based programming at Biidaaban. Once the acorns had dried out and were ready for students to work with. Michael Abitong, Land-Based Lead for Sagamok Education, Classroom Teacher, Ms. Constance, and the Educational Assistants, taught students the tradition of creating acorn necklaces. Similar to beading, students strung acorn caps onto a piece of jute, stringing coloured beads in between, creating a pattern of their choice. The traditional method, as Michael indicated to students, was to place the acorn caps back-to-back or 'top to top', with four beads in between the two caps. It results in a more decorative and prominent appearance. Traditionally, these necklaces were used as decorative pieces for regalia or ceremonial dress, given as gifts, and offered the ones creating the necklace an opportunity to find tranquility/relaxation through the act of creating something beautiful out of items that Creator provides.



In the educational sense, students were learning about patterning, dexterity/coordination (fine motor skills) when handling and stringing the beads, and even mathematics if you consider counting the beads between acorn caps and maintaining a pattern/sequence. With drumming music playing in the background, students were encouraged to reflect on their culture and traditional craftsmanship practices as they created their personal keepsakes. Once the necklaces were completed and worn proudly by the students, they were invited to go to the Cultural Space to have themselves and their necklaces smudged to preserve the good and positive intentions with which they were crafted. Michael selected a student to lead the smudge ceremony (with his direction and assistance placing and lighting the sage and medicines), creating a sense of familiarity and responsibility of carrying forward this time-immemorial tradition. Miigwech, Michael, for your continued work to preserve traditional ways and knowledge sharing.



Christmas Door Decorating Contest!



Education elves at Daycare, Biidaaban, and the Lifelong Learning Centre have been preparing for Christmas with a friendly door decorating challenge. Each door in each location has been uniquely and creatively designed too! One teacher went so far as to decorate her student's locker doors too! The festive feelings are flowing, with goodwill and kindness present at every doorway through the efforts of education staff to decorate and make the school facilities that much brighter, warmer, and festive in anticipation of Christmas celebrations.



Land-Based Learning

Flavours of Fall Harvest 2025



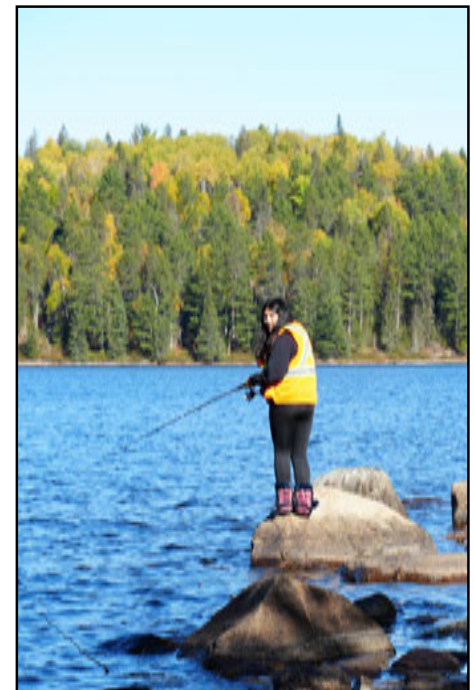
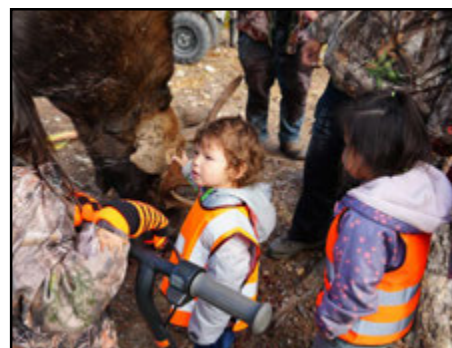
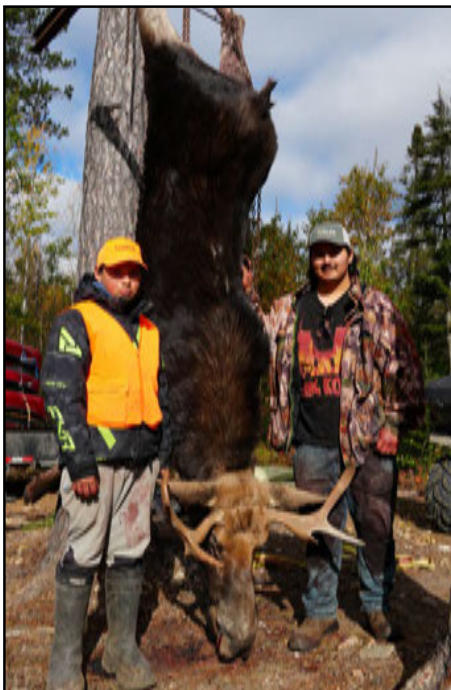
Pictured here, is Margaret Toulouse, keeping warm by her campfire and enjoying a morning cuppa. The sun was slow to wake up today and bring its welcome warmth to the crisp morning temperatures on this day of the Fall Harvest 2025. A historical figure of the annual Harvest, Margaret can often be found welcoming newcomers and the familiar, long-standing members as they arrive. Once again, Margaret was situated near the sign that honours her son Yvon, which commemorates his contributions towards developing the Fall Harvest location/grounds. Margaret proudly shares the story of her son, and how he was known for doing the work of four men. Hard-working, devoted, diligent, and a fine representative of Anishinaabe ways. This year, her daughter assisted her with a booth they set up at their campsite in honour of Yvon, and his generosity of spirit. To uphold his spirit and continue telling his story -- Margaret bought from her own funds -- a variety of chocolate bars, granola bars, chips, juice boxes, socks, mittens, hats, scarves, jackets/sweaters – useful items – which she offered visitors to her site and to anyone in need. “Maybe someone forgot some snacks, or the children were hungry after breakfast and before lunch”, she commented, “or maybe

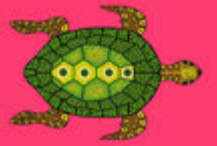
someone needed a dry pair of socks or another warm layer in the event their clothing had gotten wet.” Since the sun hadn’t quite warmed up the grounds by this point, and the photographers hadn’t considered the temperature on their exposed fingers, a pair of mini mitts was a very welcome gift! Miigwech, Margaret, for your kindness and for keeping us and community members warm and comfortable on our visit to the Fall Harvest. Your warm, inviting smile and generous, thoughtful spirit warmed us from the inside out.

There is an opportunity for anyone to come and discover an alternate way of life, one that comes with the land. Witnessing, as well as participating in Anishinaabe harvesting practices, traditions, and sharing and passing on knowledge about these practices. Several stations on-site included: fish cleaning/filleting, tanning hides/fur identification booths, crafting beaded necklaces, making mocassins or mitts from leather, floral arrangements, kids crafts, blanket tying, ribbon skirt making, creating a personal fall harvest spice combination or BBQ sauce for grilling meat on-site or preserving for a later date, to a space reserved for practicing the importance of self-care, maintaining balance in life via a foot soak from items found in nature; cedar, sage, mint, salt etc.



Students from Daycare and Biidaaban visited the grounds daily throughout the week, alternating grades and days to keep groups spread out over the week and allow for a more fulsome experience on the harvest grounds. Students were able to inspect and touch a moose up close several times throughout the day they visited; the first brought in by Julien Kiernan and his cousin. Grade 8 students, pictured here with their teacher Mr. Maracle and Education Assistant Jeanette Steinke, were given an opportunity to camp for several nights in large prospector tents equipped with wood stoves. An invaluable land-based learning opportunity, they put their knowledge to the test by maintaining the comfort and survival of themselves and their fellow classmates. Their duties included: gathering wood, maintaining the campfire, heating water, cooking over the fire, food preservation techniques, divvying up food equally amongst all students/teachers for the entire trip duration etc., fishing, baiting hooks, water safety, conservation of species, fish identification and cleaning, paddling together in the Voyageur canoe – all the while these activities offered opportunity for companionship, interaction, learning outside of the classroom, and helping younger members from the school as they arrived Fall Harvest, as part of becoming responsible young adults in their community.





2025 SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK *Holiday Calendar*

Now Available Online!

Check out what's going on over the Christmas Holidays!
www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com

NEW YEAR'S EVE POWWOW

*Goodbye 2025; Welcome 2026:
New Beginnings*

DECEMBER 31 | 5:00PM
Multi-Educational Centre

HOST DRUM: BLACK BULL MOOSE
CO-HOST: WHISTLING WIND (SERPENT RIVER)

www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com

FOOD BANK

Milk Program & Basic Needs

*Holiday
Schedule*

Monday, December 22

Three Sisters Soup and
Scone

Tuesday, December 23

Turkey and Rice Soup with
Turkey Sandwich

Monday, December 29

Hamburger Soup and
Bologna Sandwich

Tuesday, December 30

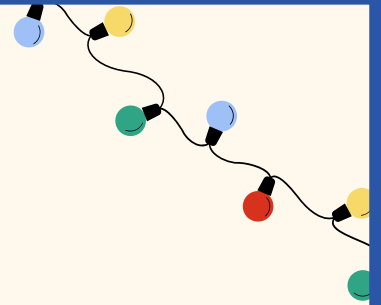
Cabbage Soup with a Bun

*Soup and sandwiches will be available at 11:30am each day.
Coffee, tea and water will be available all day. Snacks will be
available at 10:00am and 3:00pm.
Seating area will be available.*

Sarah Jacobs
705-863-3279

Gail Trudeau
705-863-2531 (After Hours Emergency)

Adam White
705-863-2875



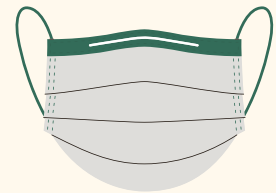
Holly Jolly Healthy Holiday

Watch for signs of illness and stay home
if you are sick



Stay up to date with immunizations, including
COVID-19 and influenza

Wear a well-fitted medical mask or KN95
in crowded indoor settings



Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your
upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing

Wash your hands often with soap and water
or alcohol-based hand rub



Keep high-touch surfaces clean (i.e., door
handles, phones, light switches)



Essential Services Schedule

December 21, 2025 - January 4, 2026

Health Services

Medical Transportation

Pre-scheduled appointments only
Deadline to book: Dec 17

MINO Clinic

December 22, 10AM-2PM

Primary Care

December 22, 10AM-2PM
Appointments can be booked through
Maamwesying's Client Care Coordinator.

Mental Wellness Brief Services

In Person: December 22, 10AM-2PM

Phone and virtual brief/crisis counselling
services will be available 8:30 am -4:00
pm throughout the two weeks
No services Dec 25, 26, or Jan 1
Call: 1-844-864-0523

Emergency Medical Accommodations

Call Paula Swift: 705-863-2984

Post Office

Closed: Dec 25 & 26, Jan 1

Wash N Suds

Closed: Dec 24, 25, 26, Jan 1

Housing

The Housing Office will be closed.
For urgent matters, please call William
Caldwell, Housing Director, 705-863-2876.

Family & Community Support Services

To reach a Band Representative or
Family Support Worker on-call for an
urgent matter, please call the After
Hours number, 705-863-2572.

Lands, Resources, & Environment

The Lands Office will be closed.
For environmental emergencies, please
call Samantha Keysis, LRE Director,
705-863-0368.

Justice

No legal aid or probation.
For urgent matters, call Renzo Caron,
705-863-3475 or Pam Sago-Toulouse,
705-863-0218

**Manitoulin Northshore Victim
Services:** 705-370-3378



Shki Waase-Aaban Binoojiinh Gamik

3042 New Subdivision Road
P.O. Box 2004
Sagamok, Ontario
POP 2L0
Manager: Rachel Toulouse
Phone: 705-865-1180
Email: toulouse_rachel@sagamok.ca



Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik

1666 Toulouse Bay Road
PO Box 2217
Sagamok, ON
POP 2L0
Principal: Becky Toulouse
Phone: 705-865-2387
Email: toulouse_rebecca@sagamok.ca



Lifelong Learning Centre

717 Sagamok Road,
Sagamok, ON
POP 2M0
Manager: Claudette Fournier-Jones
Phone: 705-865-2421
Email: fournier_claudette@sagamok.ca



Education Supports

Infrastructure
Student Resource Services
Land Based Learning, Literacy, Numeracy
Student Mental Wellness Specialist
Busing / Transportation
Leadership Team