

Assembly of First Nations
National First Nations Language
Implementation Plan
Special Chiefs Assembly
Ottawa, Ontario



DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

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Preface

This document has been developed as a supplement to the *National First Nations Languages Strategy* which was adopted by resolution number 12/2007 at the AFN Annual General Assembly, July 2007, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The purpose of this document is to outline the activities required to implement the spirit and intent of the vision for the recognition, protection and revitalization of First Nations languages in Canada. This vision must be supported through sustainable investment, capacity building, promotion and preservation. To achieve this vision First Nations and Government must combine efforts to plan and coordinate the generation of language growth envisioned herein.

This implementation plan has been prepared with input from First Nations at the community, regional and national level as part of the initial strategic plan development. This plan is a sequential effort to identify and clarify the necessary steps to implementation of the vision, goals, objectives, activities, monitoring and evaluation of First Nations language revitalization efforts to 2027.

The work undertaken to develop this plan was overseen by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages and the AFN Technical Working Group on Languages.

This plan is respectfully submitted with the twenty year vision of revitalization of our languages and that First Nations languages will be in common use in our homes, communities and nation wide as a result of the efforts identified herein. It is further our vision for Canada to respect and ensure the protection and promotion of our languages as evidenced through legislation and long-term sustainable investment.



National First Nations Language Implementation Plan

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INTRODUCTION

First Nations have declared that:¹

- *Our languages embody our relationship with the Creator and express our fundamental beliefs and values. Our languages form the cornerstone of who we are as First Nations;*
- *Our language rights are recognized and affirmed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982;*
- *The Government of Canada has a fiduciary obligation to provide the necessary resources to First Nations in order to protect our languages;*
- *Our language rights extend to every First Nations child to learn, and to be taught in his or her First Nations language; and*
- *First Nations must control all aspects of First Nations language revitalization, maintenance and protection including the design and delivery of First Nations language programming.*

These principles form the framework and approach that the Government of Canada must employ, together with First Nations governments to make advancements in the protection, promotion, preservation and revitalization of First Nations languages.

This document is an supplementary document to the National First Nations Language Strategy which was adopted by resolution # 12/2007 at the Annual General Assembly, July 2007, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The purpose of this document is to outline the activities required to implement the spirit and intent of our vision for the recognition, protection and revitalization of our First Nations languages in Canada. This vision must be supported through sustainable investment, capacity building, promotion and preservation.

Our policy objectives are to have jurisdiction over First Nations languages which are recognized and affirmed consistent with Section 35 of the Constitution Act. We are also seeking legislated protection via a First Nations Language Protection Act that would be consistent with First Nations and Government of Canada laws dealing with languages. A draft of that Act is an addendum to this document.

¹ The Critical State of First Nations Languages in Canada, Presentation by the Chiefs committee on Languages to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Sixth Session, New York, May 14-25, 2007



LANGUAGES IN CRISIS

*Language is our unique relationship to the Creator, our attitudes, beliefs, values and fundamental notions of what is truth. Our Languages are the cornerstone of who we are as a People. Without our Languages our cultures cannot survive.*²

The “Indian Act of Canada” enacted in 1876, granted the federal government and its agents sweeping powers over Indian education. Under the Act the federal government developed and implemented Indian Residential School and Indian Day School policies that were meant to assimilate Indian children into Canadian society. Children were forced to “un-learn” their indigenous language, culture, heritage and beliefs and to re-learn a foreign language, religion and way of life. These policies remained in effect for over 100 years in Canada.³

Colonization efforts on the part of the Canadian government during the residential school era devastated families and resulted in the loss of language and culture all in the name of assimilation. First Nation children were physically abused for speaking their First Nations languages and systematically removed from their homes and sent great distances away from their families and communities. The intergenerational impacts of these abuses have resulted in the loss of many languages, *forever*, as our Elders die and their knowledge of our languages are lost with them.

In 1998, a state of emergency on First Nations languages was declared by the Chiefs in Assembly, resolution #35/98 at its 19th Annual General Assembly. The resolution stated:

That the government of Canada act immediately to recognize, officially and legally, the First Nation languages of Canada, and to make a commitment to provide the resources necessary to reverse First Nation language loss and to prevent the extinction of our languages...

First Nations languages are at a critical state of decline. Analysis of 1986-1996 Canadian Census data indicates that 50 of the 53 First Nations languages in Canada are declining, endangered or facing extinction. There are only three First Nations languages that are anticipated to survive. They are Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut . These languages have about 100,000 speakers worldwide.⁴ For many

² Towards Linguistic Justice for First Nations, Assembly of First Nations Principles for Revitalization of First Nations Languages, Ottawa, 1990

³ AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages Submission to Ministerial Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures August 2004

⁴ Canadian Heritage Aboriginal Languages Initiative Evaluation Ottawa, 2002



languages, the only fluent speakers are Elders, with knowledge and usage weakest among the young.⁵

From 1996-2001, the *Aboriginal Peoples Survey* showed that the total number of Aboriginal people who identified by Mother Tongue declined from 23% to 9% in spite of the fact that the total Aboriginal population surveyed *increased* by 18%.

The AFN conducted its own survey between 1990-1993 and based on the data collected concluded that almost *70% of First Nations communities' languages are in decline, endangered or critically endangered.*

Preservation of First Nations languages must be a higher priority of government because of the link between cultural preservation and language. Without language, the main vehicle of transmission of cultural values and traditions no longer exists.⁶

FEDERAL OBLIGATION FOR FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES

The Crown has historically ignored the linguistic rights of First Nations Peoples, yet the *Constitution Act 1982, Section 35.1*, entrenches our First Nations language rights in the Canadian Constitution. The Federal Government has a legal obligation through treaties to provide adequate resources that will enable First Nations to exercise this right.

Article 27 of The *United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* states that:

In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language” (Ratified by Canada, August 1976)

Article 14 of the *United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* also states,

Indigenous Peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures... States shall take effective measures, whenever any right of indigenous peoples may be threatened, to ensure this right is protected...⁷

⁵ Canadian Heritage, *Aboriginal Languages Initiative Evaluation* Ottawa, 2002

⁶ *ibid* (background)

⁷ *AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages Submission to Ministerial Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures* August 2004



There is currently no legislated protection for First Nations language.⁸ The *Official Languages Act of Canada* (1969) recognizes French and English as the official languages of Canada. These have received further protection in the *Constitution of Canada* (1982) in sections 16 and 23 of *the Canadian Constitution's Canadian Chart of Rights and Freedoms*. Neither the Canadian Constitution nor federal legislation refers to First Nations language specifically. Funding, therefore, must be solicited from secondary government sources through cooperation agreements between the federal government and territories for First Nations and minority languages.⁹

The AFN has coordinated and monitored the National Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) since 1998. The ALI evaluation conducted in 2002 indicated overall that the initiative has been successful.

Lessons learned from the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) indicated that there were many positive outcomes as a result of the initiative. There are more language projects than prior to the ALI and most informants viewed the ALI as an important first step.

The initiative has resulted in heightened awareness of community and political leadership towards language revitalization. There has also been an increased interest in Aboriginal languages among Aboriginal politicians and community leadership. Further, there have been significant links identified between language ability and economic opportunity as a result of the initiative.¹⁰

Some of the negative findings of the evaluation were that there is no broad national strategy and framework for language revitalization, nor is there baseline language data that is current and up to date. There are not enough resources for long-term initiatives and there is a lack of consultation with First Nations on guidelines and policy impacting on First Nations languages.¹¹

Only five of the thirteen provincial and territorial governments have developed policies and programs to support Aboriginal languages.¹² Most of these support community-based projects. These jurisdictions are:¹³

- **British Columbia** – whose *First Nations Peoples' Heritage Language and Culture Program* was established by the *First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Act* enacted in 1990 by the Province;

⁸ Canadian Heritage *Aboriginal Languages Initiative Evaluation* 2002

⁹ *ibid* (Background and trends)

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid*



- **Quebec** – which encourages Aboriginal languages in schooling and daycare, yet does not have a formal Aboriginal Languages policy;
- **Yukon** – which has undertaken an extensive community-based revitalization program funded through, and agreement with, the federal government; and
- **Northwest Territories and Nunavut** – which are committed to implementing the provisions of their Official Languages Acts with the help of federal funds.

Federal-Provincial-Territorial Aboriginal Language Funding in Canada 2001-2002¹⁴

Region	Aboriginal Language Funding
Federal (ALI)	\$5,000,000
Quebec	N/A
British Columbia	\$600,000
Nunavut	\$1,200,000
Northwest Territories	\$1,900,000
Yukon	\$1,100,000
Total	\$9,980,000

This implementation plan is designed to address our long term vision for First Nations languages in Canada. That vision is that by 2027 First Nations languages will be revitalized and in common use in First Nations homes, communities and nation wide and that Canada will respect and ensure the protection of our languages as evidenced through legislation and long-term sustainable investment.

WHAT IS REQUIRED

Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being¹⁵

The health of a language has to do with the number of its speakers, how these speakers are concentrated in the population, and particularly, *how many child speakers there are.*¹⁶ “Healthy” languages are not only used by a majority of the population but are used for most, or all, situations requiring communication.¹⁷ Languages codify and mirror the cultures of the people who speak them. If First

¹⁴ Canadian Heritage Aboriginal Languages Evaluation, Ottawa 2002 (background and trends)

¹⁵ AFN, Towards Linguistic Justice for First Nations Principles for Revitalization of First Nations Languages, Ottawa, 1990

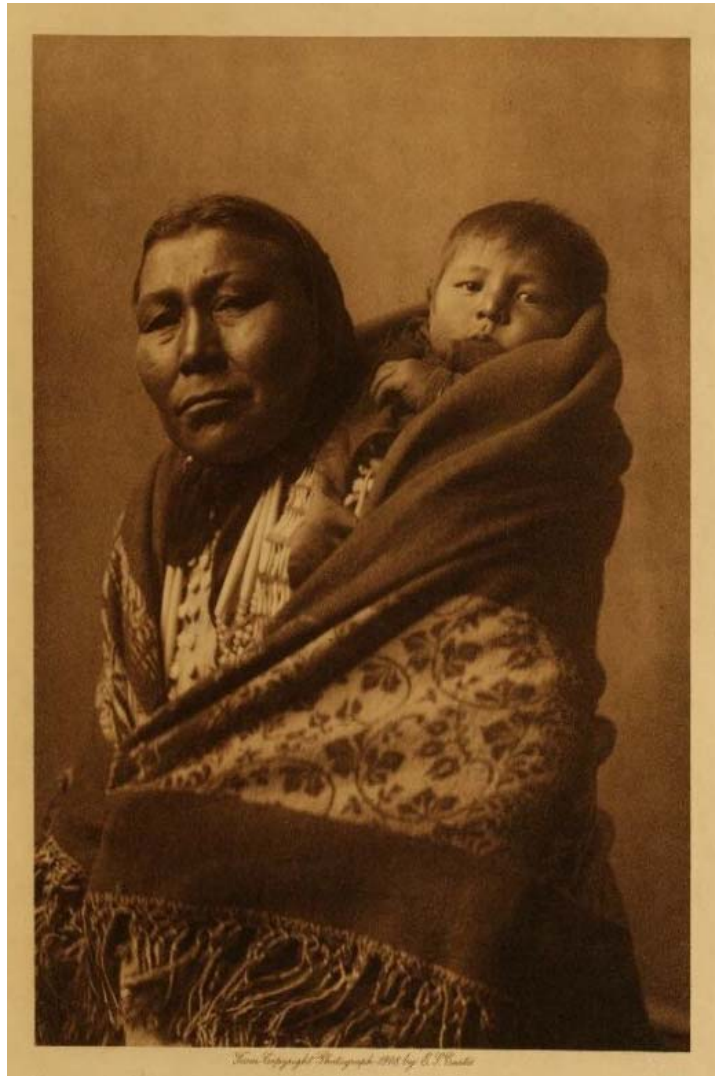
¹⁶ Bauman J.J. A Guide to Issues in Indian Language Retention, Washington DC 1980

¹⁷ *ibid*



Nations languages are to survive immediate action is necessary to revitalize, recognize, protect, promote and preserve them.

To achieve the vision of revitalization of First Nations languages by 2027 there are two key policy objectives required to implement this vision. First, that First Nations have jurisdiction over languages which is recognized and affirmed consistent with section 35 of the Constitution Act. Second, that First Nations seek legislated protection via a First Nations Language Act that would be consistent with First Nations and Government of Canada laws dealing with languages. The following strategy has been adopted by the AFN to achieve these goals.



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE STRATEGY

Vision: By 2027 First Nations languages will be revitalized and in common use in First Nations homes, communities and nation wide. Canada will respect and ensure the protection of our languages as evidenced through legislation and long-term sustainable investment.	
Policy Objectives	
1. First Nations have jurisdiction over First Nations languages which is recognized and affirmed consistent with section 35 of the Constitution Act.	2. First Nations seek legislated protection via a First Nations languages Act that would be consistent with First Nations and Government of Canada laws dealing with languages.
Goals and Milestones ¹⁸	
1. Increase the number of First Nations people who speak their language by increasing the opportunities to learn their language.	3. Improve the proficiency levels of First Nations citizens in speaking, listening to, reading and writing First Nations languages.
2. Increase the opportunities to use First Nations languages by increasing the number of circumstances and situations where First Nations languages can be used.	4. Increase the rate of which First Nations languages can be enhanced, revitalized and developed so that they can be used in the full range of modern activities.
5. Foster among First Nations and Non-First Nations a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about First Nations languages so that multi-lingualism becomes a valued part of Canadian society.	
Heritage Canada Language and culture	INAC Education - Elementary Secondary Post Secondary Parental-Community Involvement Cultural Ed. Centres
	Other Departments Health Canada Industry Canada HRSDC SDC Provinces
Language Revitalization Activities	
1. research and development	4. modernizing and updating language
2. curriculum development	5. testing language skills
3. information dissemination	6. certification of language skills
First Nations Language Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	
1. Monitoring and evaluation of the health of First Nations languages in order to measure progress in the achievement of the Government investment and language policies.	
2. Document over time the Government contribution across sectors to changes in the health of First Nations languages.	
Proposed First Nations Language Revitalization Indicators	
1. Number of people who speak a First Nations language	6. the use of the First Nations language
2. Opportunities to learn a First Nations language	7. the production of First Nations language materials.
3. Proficiency in a First Nations language	8. Behaviour toward First Nations language
4. the visibility of the First Nations language	9. The attitudes toward and beliefs and values about First Nations languages.
5. the availability of the First Nations language	

¹⁸ Adapted from Te Tūāoma The Maori Language: The Steps that Have Been Taken 1999 New Zealand



IMPLEMENTATION

In order to increase the number of First Nations people who speak their language we must *increase the opportunities for learning language*. We also need to *increase the opportunities to use First Nations languages* by increasing the number of circumstances and situations where First Nations languages can be used.

Measures have been taken in Canada to promote *bilingualism* via the *Official Languages Act of 1969* and in 1982 the adoption of *Section 23 of the Charter of Rights* provided for constitutional guarantees for *minority language rights* as well.

Nunavut is a jurisdiction unique in Canada where the population consists mainly of Inuit speaking their own language of Inuktitut. Nunavut is not predominately English or French speaking but there is an overwhelming majority consisting of an *Aboriginal people speaking a single Aboriginal language*.¹⁹

One of the lessons already learned in Nunavut is that *English is the language of colonialism*. Educating Aboriginal children in *English only* does not work. Residential schools were established to detach Aboriginal children from their culture and deny them the right to use their own languages and require them to use English only. *Loss of language and educational underachievement are linked*. The strengthening of Aboriginal language in the school, the home and the community can bring improvement to achievement in both the Aboriginal language and English (and in the case of Nunavut that language is Inuktitut).²⁰

The loss of language among children, as a result of ever broadening areas of media and in their social lives, is a major reason for concern and immediate action.

*If the Indigenous community has made the decision to work towards revitalization of their ancestral language, its widespread and early erosion among children represents a clear danger signal. If not reversed, the permanent and irreversible loss of the language is simply a matter [of] time.*²¹

Serious measures are required to address this erosion which is clearly evident among First Nations in a similarly alarming fashion to that of Nunavut. Legislated efforts such as Bill 6 (the *Nunavut Official Languages Act*) and Bill 7 (the *Inuit Language Protection Act*) establish official language requirements for territorial institutions and the demand for communications and services in an official

¹⁹ Berger, T.R., *Conciliator's Final Report* march 2006 "The Nunavut Project" Vancouver 2006 page ix

²⁰ *ibid* page 25-26

²¹ *ibid* page 27



language which includes the Inuit language. Inuit, English and French all have official status in Nunavut.

In the absence of such legislation for First Nations languages the example of Nunavut is of worthy note. In Nunavut the Government of Canada and the Nunavut government have set a precedence in supporting the protection, use and promotion of the Inuit language (an Aboriginal language) by public bodies, municipal corporations and private sector bodies.²² This is the vision of this plan.

BROADCASTING

Radio and television broadcasting is a significant area of language action. The *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* currently provides for radio and television programming for Aboriginal people in the north. **This, or a program equivalent, is required beyond the north.**

Canadian Heritage provides resources for the *Canadian Television Fund-Aboriginal Languages* with the objective of assisting the creation and broadcast of prime-time high quality, culturally significant Canadian television programs in both official languages and Aboriginal languages. It further maintains mechanisms for the support of Aboriginal languages productions in eligible genres. **This, or a program equivalent, requires expansion beyond the current level of resourcing.**

Northern Native Broadcast Access Program (Canadian Heritage) provides funding and assistance for the production and distribution of Aboriginal radio and television programming in Aboriginal languages that reflect Aboriginal culture, community issues, concerns and current affairs. The communications societies serve communities in three Territories and the northern portion of seven provinces. **This, or a program equivalent, is required beyond the northern sectors of the country.**

The **Canada Council for the Arts** assists Aboriginal media artists to develop their careers and to produce independent media artworks. **This, or a program equivalent, requires expansion beyond the current level of resourcing.**

There is a significant gap in broadcast program capability and adequate resources and government commitment is required to address this.

²² [Bill 6](#) Official Languages Act Fourth Session Second Legislative Assembly of Nunavut Government Bill and [Bill 7](#) Inuit Language Protection Act Fourth Session, Second Legislative Assembly of Nunavut Government Bill.



IMPLEMENTATION

It is critical that there is an increase in the opportunity for improving the proficiency levels of First Nations citizens in speaking, listening to, reading and writing First Nations languages, as well as, increasing the rate of which First Nations languages can be enhanced, revitalized and developed so that they can be used in the full range of modern activities.

Education

One of the overarching elements of the AFN First Nations Language Strategy is education. An *First Nations Language Education Plan* is required based on several key components. These components consist of:

Production of First Nation language resources for use by First Nation teachers and students.²³

Materials graded according to language proficiency of the student are essential to ensure that interest is maintained in learning and using the language and that quality language education is provided. What is required is:

- adequate resourcing for the development of First Nation language materials on an annual basis and concentrated around a 5 –10 year plan for development of these materials; and
- a structured process for prioritizing the development of materials and associated professional development for the school sector;

Production of First Nation language assessment instruments for use by teachers. What is required is:

- a set aside of funds for the development of assessment tools for language use proficiency.

Strategies to increase the supply of teachers who are fluent in First Nations languages. What is required is:

- a recruitment campaign for First Nations language teachers;
- an increase in the number and availability of language programs for First Nations language teachers; and
- scholarships geared at First Nations language teachers.

²³ Adapted from Te Tūāhanga Te Māori Language: The Steps That Have Been Taken.



Strategies to improve the First Nations language proficiency of existing teachers. What is required is:

- the development and implementation of First Nations language proficiency assessment instruments for First Nations language teachers;
- upgrading of teacher trainees in First Nations language instruction skills; and
- improving the proficiency of early childhood education teachers.

Improvements in the ways school administrations cater to the First Nations language skills of a school's students. What is required is:

- ensuring that school principals, Ministries of Education, Boards of Trustees, are aware of their obligations to their First Nations students regarding First Nations languages instruction, proficiency and promotion.

Fostering community support for First Nation language instruction. What is required:

- ensure parental and community involvement in First Nations language learning through projects that promote intergenerational transmission of First Nations language;
- encourage First Nations language speakers to get into teacher training; and
- promote the awareness amongst students and parents of the value of learning First Nation languages and culture.

Current initiatives that require enhancement²⁴:

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provides funding for the *Cultural Education Centre Program* that supports Indian, Inuit and Innu communities in expressing, preserving, developing and promoting their cultural heritage through operation of Indian, Inuit and Innu cultural education centres. **This program is severely under funded and needs to be more adequately resourced.**

²⁴ AFN First Nations Languages Inventory of language Funding Sources by Government Department Ottawa 2007. The data provided in the inventory includes a summary table of funding sources by government department for First Nation languages related programming. The source is the Treasury board of Canada <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pmd-obgr/Site/Step1.aspx?Language=EN&fid=2>



First Nations and Inuit Child Initiative, Day-Care (Ontario and Alberta) and Early Childhood Development (INAC) – these programs provide resources to increase the supply of quality child care services in First Nations and Inuit communities, thus providing support to working and studying parents and promoting healthy child development; the programs also provide funding to support the provision of day-care services for income assistance recipients on-reserve in Ontario and Alberta; and to improve and expand Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs and services for First Nations and other Aboriginal children. Language components are a small piece of the programming that is provided through these funds, resourcing, however, is very limited. **This program is severely under funded and needs to be more adequately resourced.**

Elementary and Secondary Instructional Services (INAC) – Band Operated Schools - provides for students living on reserve with elementary and secondary education comparable to those that are required in provincial schools in the same geographic area in which the reserve is located. It is expected that students will receive a comparable education to other Canadians in the same province of residence, with similar educational outcomes to other Canadians and with attendant socio-economic benefits to themselves, their communities and Canada. Instructional services are also funded for Federal schools and provincial schools ensuring access to provincial elementary and secondary education programs and services. Some resourcing for First Nations language instruction is provided for through this program although it is minimal. **This program is severely under funded and needs to be more adequately resourced.**

The *Indian Studies Support Program* (INAC) provides for the development and delivery of college and university level courses for First Nations, Inuit and Innu students; research and development on First Nations, Inuit and Innu education; and support for the First Nation University of Canada. This program does include limited First Nations language based programming through its individual fund recipients. **This program is severely under funded and needs to be more adequately resourced.**

The *Post Secondary Education* is resourced by INAC in order to improve the employability of First Nation, Inuit and Innu by providing eligible students with access to education and skill development opportunities at the post-secondary level. Targeted efforts are not provided for by the program to encourage or enhance targeted skill areas such as First Nations language instruction. **This program has been capped since the late 1990's and is severely under funded and needs to be more adequately resourced.**

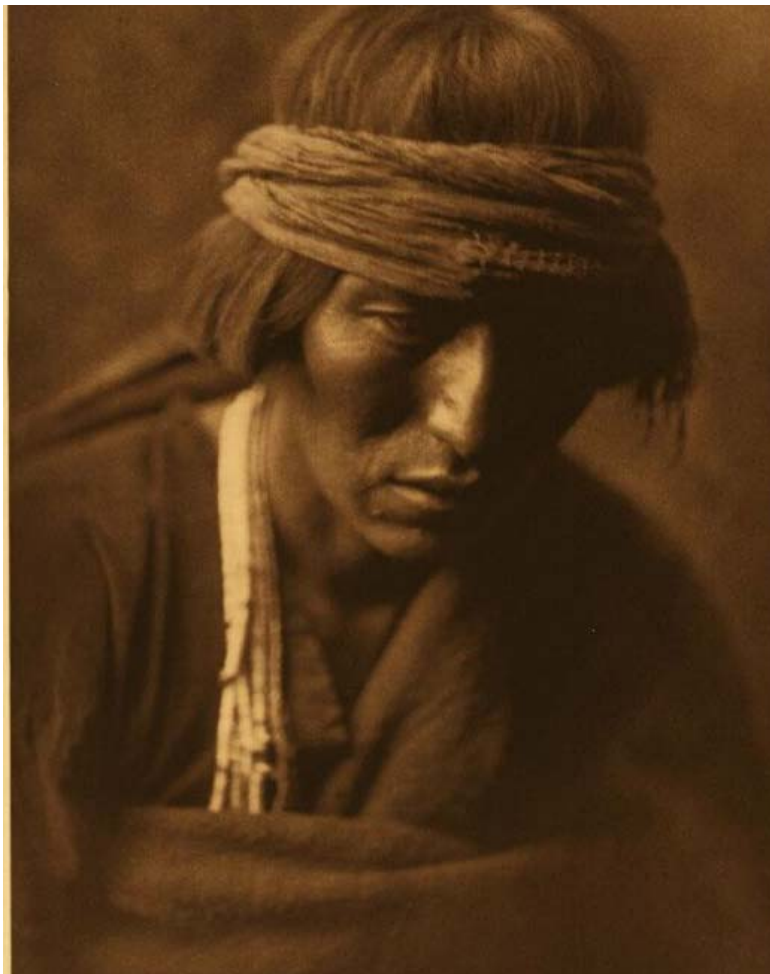
Teacher Recruitment and Retention resources are provided by INAC to help ensure that First Nation schools are able to recruit and retain qualified teachers and provide them with professional development activities. **These funds are**



severely inadequate and need to be enhanced to meet the economy of scale that is required to foster teacher interest.

According to the ALI (2002) evaluation “there is a massive need for Aboriginal language programming to reverse the decline and trend towards extinction of Aboriginal languages, to which very few are given a chance of survival. This is a very high priority for many Aboriginal peoples and must be recognized as such by governments and the Aboriginal leadership.”

Targeted funding is required to provide for the production of First Nations language resources for use by First Nations teachers and students. This includes funding for materials to enhance language proficiency, develop First Nations language assessment instruments, increase supply of First Nations language teachers, enhance their proficiency and to foster community support for First Nations language instruction. Annex 1 provides a costing framework for the phases of activities related to what would be required based on *real cost estimates* to implement the various elements of First Nations language in an education context.



IMPLEMENTATION

Foster among First Nations and Non-First Nations a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about First Nations languages so that multi-lingualism becomes a valued part of Canadian society.

What is Required:

Encouragement of the use of First Nations language by stakeholders (including government agencies, First Nations governments, communities and the private sector) is required to promote a positive attitude, accurate beliefs and positive values about First Nations languages.

A strategy is required that ensures the development, publication and dissemination of literature designed to increase the use of First Nations language in First Nations, governance agencies and the private sector.

The publication of First Nations languages literature as a collaborative effort by government agencies contributes to the revitalization of First Nations languages by strengthening its use and fostering positive values and beliefs about First Nations languages as a valued part of Canadian society.

The purpose of these literature must be to provide advice on how to develop local strategies and plans that are appropriate for each organization and community in order to foster usage of First Nations language in every day interactions and conducting business within the community and/or organization.

These plans should be designed so that evaluative elements are an integral piece of any plan to ensure progress towards enhanced First Nations language use as an overall goal of the revitalization effort.

Current Initiatives

Canada Council for the Arts *Aboriginal Media Arts Program* - assists Aboriginal media artists to develop their careers and to produce independent media artworks.

Canada Council for the Arts *Aboriginal Peoples Music Program* - assist in the development of the professional skills of Aboriginal music artists and strengthening of organizations dedicated to Aboriginal music. The program also assists in raising the profile of Aboriginal music and musicians.



Canada Council for the Arts – Grants to Aboriginal Writers, Storytellers and Publishers - provides assistance for the artistic development of emerging Aboriginal writers and storytellers and for enhancing literary creation in Aboriginal languages in Canada. The program also provides assistance in the development of Aboriginal publishing.

Canadian Heritage – Aboriginal Canada Portal - provides Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians with access to engaging information about Canada's Aboriginal people in a way that fosters greater understanding in Canada and beyond. The program supports projects aimed at developing Aboriginal cultural content, providing access to that content in both official languages, and encouraging cultural participation.

Canadian Heritage – Gateway to Canadian Cultural Content Online Fund – resources are provided to increase the amount of quality Canadian cultural content for the Internet and to build audiences for that content by making it accessible. Resources are also provided to engage Canadians in using the content and sharing their perspectives on Canadian events, people and values.

Canadian Heritage – Museums Assistance Program – Aboriginal Component - provides funding to Aboriginal organizations and partner heritage organizations to enrich, preserve, present and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Industry Canada – First Nations SchoolNet - provides connectivity and e-learning tools and services to First Nations K-12 students on reserves.

Library and Archives Canada – Aboriginal Heritage Initiatives - Aboriginal Heritage Initiatives, in consultation and in partnership with Aboriginal communities, assists in the identification of universal issues and concerns of Aboriginal peoples in order to develop collections, improve services and preserve the documentary heritage of these communities. It provides a focus for the management and development of library and archival programs.

Although these programs have design and intent within the scope of this plan, in terms of enhancing positive attitudes, accurate beliefs and positive values about First Nations languages and cultures, they are inadequately resourced to address the wide scope of the First Nations language issue as we have described herein. These programs are limited in impact, therefore, and additional programs like these, along with adequate resourcing is required to properly address this goal over time.



MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE STRATEGY EFFECTIVENESS

Consistent with the five overarching goals of the First Nations Language Strategy, the overall effectiveness of the language revitalization activities will be monitored and evaluated against the following indicators as outlined in the First Nations Language Strategy described on page 10 of this document.

These indicators include:

- 1. the number of people who speak a First Nations language;**
- 2. opportunities to learn a First Nations language;**
- 3. proficiency in a First Nations language;**
- 4. the availability of the First Nations language;**
- 5. the use of the First Nations language;**
- 6. the production of First Nations language materials;**
- 7. behaviour towards First Nations language; and**
- 8. the attitudes toward and beliefs and values about First Nations languages.**

To ensure results occur, and to monitor the health of First Nations language as a result of implementation of this plan, the Government of Canada is encouraged to assist in conducting a sociolinguistic survey to enable stakeholders to see how healthy First Nations languages really are, as well as, to compare these data to situations revealed in earlier language studies and data collection efforts related to Aboriginal language retention.²⁵ The results of this survey can then be used to plan and direct future practices and policies targeted at the protection, preservation, promotion and revitalization of First Nations languages in Canada.

²⁵ Adapted from Te Tūāoma the Maori Language: The Steps that Have been Taken, New Zealand



THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

Attempts have been made over the last 30 years by First Nations through lobby efforts, drafting legislation, resolutions and ongoing research to make the protection, preservation, promotion and revitalization of First Nations languages a priority to the Government of Canada. It is clear other countries have been quite successful in their efforts at revitalization of their languages such as with Maori in New Zealand.

What is required to ensure success in the protection, preservation, promotion and revitalization efforts of First Nations language in Canada is as follows:

- **recognition of the importance of strengthening the intergenerational transmission of First Nations language, particularly among the very young and the old;**
- **revitalization efforts must be targeted towards key segments of the population e.g. the very young;**
- **resources that are required for revitalization efforts must be adequate;**
- **the role of First Nations language in Canadian society must be recognized constitutionally and legislatively as an inherent right;**
- **who will be responsible for revitalization efforts and what the roles of stakeholders will be in terms of responsibility and outcomes must be clear;**
- **monitoring and evaluation of outcomes to ensure efforts are successful is essential to assess impacts over time on the *health* of First Nations languages;**
- **the establishment of targets for revitalization efforts and a long term vision of determining the *health* of First Nations languages and utilization of those as measures of success or failure is required;**
- **timelines with key milestones identified are required for the implementation of targeted revitalization efforts between now and 2027; and**
- **annual reports of progress as mandated by legislation to ensure accountability within the milieu of First Nations and the Government of Canada as co-partners and stakeholders must be required and mandated by law.**



NEXT STEPS

The protection, preservation, promotion and revitalization efforts of First Nations language in Canada is a daunting and challenging task. Our people are resilient and the relationship with Government towards the end goal of improving the health of our languages must be enhanced. Together we must forge ahead to ensure the future of our children, our languages, our culture and our values. To do anything less would be unacceptable at this time when our languages are on the verge of extinction.

***If we can speak and understand our language our
elders can tell us who we are.²⁶***

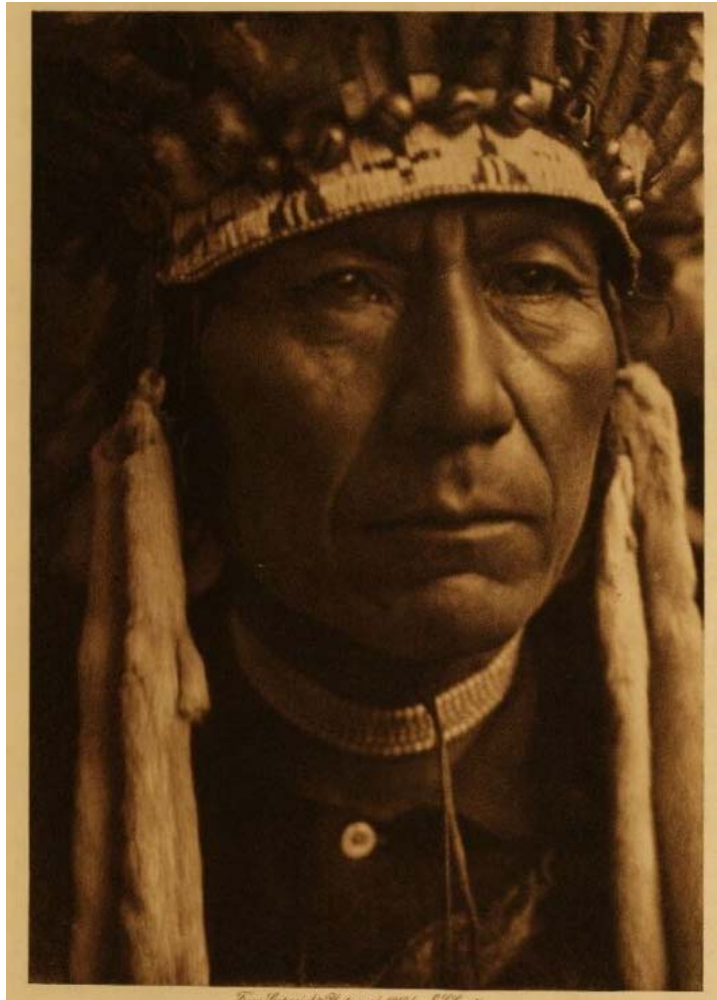


Photo credits²⁷

²⁶ AFN The Aboriginal Language Policy Study Ottawa 1988 Mi'kmawey

²⁷ All photos used in this document are credited to [http:// www.firstpeople.us](http://www.firstpeople.us) First People of Canada and the U.S.- Turtle Island



ANNEX 1 PROPOSED COSTING FRAMEWORK ²⁸

This proposed costing framework is provided as a companion to this plan for illustrative purposes for how implementation could be resourced and phased in over time.

COST CATEGORY	APPROACH	COMMENTS
PHASE ONE: Development		
Community Plan Development	One-time, block funding amount per community	ASSUMPTION: (1) All communities will require a base amount – which could be similar to that provided for community health transfer assessments; (2) Additional variable amounts for large populations (e.g. for surveys and needs assessments).
Region/Language Plan Development	One-time, block funding per language family	ASSUMPTION: (1) All language families will receive the same funding amount to develop a language plan and variable amounts for language families with large numbers of languages.
Electronic Applications (web sites, software, etc.)	Community and region applicants	ASSUMPTION: Estimated to be accessed by all regions and 25% of communities. Average cost per application: \$50,000 per language family, and \$20,000 per community.
Development of Regional Language Authorities	Provide support to communities and language family plan development	\$200,000 per authority
National Coordination and Securing Protection of First Nation languages	Support for Chiefs Committee on Languages supported by a core technical team to advance options	To be developed by AFN in conjunction with Chiefs Committee on Languages.

²⁸ Excerpted and adapted by Laurel Lamchuk-Favel Annex 2 of the Draft for Consideration National First Nations Languages Strategy May 25, 2007



COST CATEGORY	APPROACH	COMMENTS
PHASE TWO: implementation		
CHILDREN AND YOUTH LANGUAGE EDUCATION		
Pre-School (Language nests)	<p>Child care & AHSOR: funding of staff person fluent in language for 30 hours per week</p> <p>Community/Parent language nests (preference to communities without child care or AHSOR, or which have children on waiting lists for these centres).</p>	<p>OPTIONS:</p> <p>(1) day care and head start centres in communities with flourishing and enduring languages will be funded for one fluent speaker (language assistant). It is expected that other staff will be gradually trained / replaced by fluent speakers, allowing these centres to become immersion focused over time. No additional base salaries for these existing staff; however, salary incentives will be provided for fluency.</p> <p>(2) Language nests (parent driven): Assume that all critically endangered and declining language communities will require a language nest, and 50% of flourishing and enduring. Cost two individuals with knowledge of the language at a per diem rate for five days/week.</p> <p>Language resources and tools included under Community Resources below</p>
K-12 Programs	<p>Per student funding approach Student language costs based on Joint AFN/INAC BOFF Cost Driver report recommendations: \$11,304 for immersion, based on the Alberta immersion costs for French instruction; and \$981 for subject area instruction, based on First Nations survey responses. Per student cost includes:</p> <p>Subject Model: salary/benefits of teachers, educators/assistants/elders, honoraria/stipends/instructional supplies, materials, field trips, travel, teacher training costs, pedagogical support.</p> <p>Immersion Model: salary/benefits of teachers and educators, facility rental, operating/management costs,</p>	<p>ASSUMPTION:</p> <p>(1) In addition to existing immersion schools, cost one additional full immersion school and one additional partial immersion school per language family at an average size of students.</p> <p>(2) Sequentially add funds over a twenty year period to other schools, using the target of 70% full immersion and 30% partial immersion.</p> <p>(3) Regional authorities to administer funds to provincial schools in areas where there is a high density of First Nation students. Funds would be for subject instruction of languages on</p>



COST CATEGORY	APPROACH	COMMENTS
	telecommunications, instructional supplies, materials, administration, office supplies, postage, service contracts, equipment rental, professional development	a per student basis.
K-12 Language Curriculum Development	Per student costs based on Joint AFN/INAC Band Operated Funding Formula (BOFF) Cost Driver Report: \$688	ASSUMPTION: Cost curriculum development for all partial and full immersion schools. (Recommendation from cost driver report that curriculum development be considered separately in funding formulations)
COMMUNITY BASED ADULT EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES		
Community-based Language Instruction Programs	Adult programming: immersion, master apprentice programs, low intensity programming for employees. Assume programs could be available over a September – May period (nine months)	<p>ASSUMPTION: Flourishing, enduring and declining language communities can provide adult training now (approximately 30% of communities); other communities will initially focus on language education to children and youth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Of those which are flourishing or enduring: 25% (48) might provide high intensity immersion (based costs on existing First Nation adult immersion programs; and an average of 10-20 participants per community annually), and - flourishing, enduring and declining language communities would provide lower intensity language training for 15-20 participants per community <p>Note: developmental costs, including curriculum and instructional tools are considered below under Community Resources</p> <p>Note: language assistant costs are included in K-12 per diem.</p>



COST CATEGORY	APPROACH	COMMENTS
Language Assistants	Community-based practical experience for post-secondary students	ASSUMPTION: An average of ten persons would be funded per language family per year, and implemented over a ten year period. Based on the French federal model which provides 25 hr/wk Sept through May: \$18,500 for nine months.
Community Resources and Activities/Events	Activities as defined by community plans. Assume all communities would require this funding. Includes curriculum development for adult programming.	ASSUMPTION: As all communities' projects will be unique, will assume an average of \$20,000 - \$40,000 per community per year
POST SECONDARY LANGUAGE EDUCATION		
Teacher Language Training	Specifically for those persons working in the education sector and wishing to upgrade their language skills in the summer break AND where adult language instruction programs are not available in their community	ASSUMPTION: Targeted to working individuals: bursaries of \$3,000 to teachers and ECD workers who are semi-fluent for out-of-community language training (room, board, tuition) of 2 months duration. Assume that an average of two persons per community where First Nations language is taught as a subject (partial immersion) would receive a bursary for this instruction.
Curriculum Development (ECD Programs, post-secondary courses in language and immersion instruction methods)	Developmental funding for those institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - now delivering ECD programs, or - providing post secondary education with First Nations majors, to assist in development of curriculum specific to languages and/or language families 	ASSUMPTION: fifteen post-secondary institutions would now be interested in developing these curricula at \$100,000 per institution over five years.
Post Secondary Education	Grants to individuals for full-time First Nations language and/or language/instruction study in post secondary institutions:	ASSUMPTION: assume 10 students per post secondary institution offering language programs, implemented over five years. Use INAC's average post-secondary cost per student



COST CATEGORY	APPROACH	COMMENTS
TECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS		
Electronic Applications (web sites, soft ware etc.)	Community, language families or region applicants	ASSUMPTION: Estimated to be accessed by all language families/regions and 25% of communities. Average cost per application: \$50,000 per language family, and \$20,000 per community. (Communities to be funded for two years)
REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SUPPORT		
Regional Language Authorities	Costs associated with regional language authorities to provide support to communities (core staff of coordinator and admin assistant)	To be determined through regional processes and dialogue to establish clear understanding of services to be provided by language family offices
Language Development Resources	Word development, validation, protocols, certification guidelines etc.	Each of 65 languages is assumed to require 2 years of funding at \$100,000 each year. Phased in over twenty years.
National Activities	Costs associated with national office functions (core staff of director, policy advisor, data analyst, administrative assistant) and national b-annual meetings.	Costs to be determined related to identified functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional development • Advocacy and coordination • First Nation languages symposium



Annex 2

Assembly of First Nations

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY First Nations Language Private Members' Bill November 2007

Date of Notice	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading	Report from Standing committee	3 rd Reading	Date of Assent

This First Nation Languages Bill was developed under the guidance of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages and Technical Working Group on Languages.

**Prepared by:
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FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE PROTECTION ACT

An act to preserve, protect and promote the First Nations languages of Canada.

PREAMBLE

Whereas First Nations languages and cultures are unique and have been in existence since time immemorial;

Whereas the existence and presence of First Nations people constitute a fundamental characteristic of Canada;

Whereas First Nations' distinct cultural and political rights, including the right to full freedom of expression, reflects the rich cultural diversity of Canada;

Whereas First Nation languages are an integral part of culture and are essential tools of cohesion, identification, communication and creative expression;

Whereas there are many First Nation languages spoken and used by First Nations peoples in Canada;

Whereas support is required to ensure the meaningful engagement of First Nation language speakers, without regard to their first language learned, so they have equal opportunities to obtain education, employment and participate in their governance;

Whereas the preservation of First Nations languages require legal protection;

Whereas commitment to the revitalization, recognition, protection, promotion and preservation of First Nations languages through legislation is essential;

And whereas acts of suppression directed against First Nations languages and cultures are in conflict with Canada's policy of Aboriginal Self-government;

Whereas the Parliament of Canada acknowledges a commitment to the protection, revitalization, preservation and enhancement of the First Nations languages as living languages;

Whereas legal recognition is required to ensure that the use of First Nation languages will be entrenched in the Constitution of Canada consistent with the fundamental and legal authority included in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;



Affirming that First Nations have an inherent right to the use of First Nation languages;

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

SHORT TITLE

This act may be cited as the First Nations Languages Protection Act

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Act –

The term “First Nation peoples” is defined in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act of 1982* and, for the purposes of this Act, shall include Indian and First Nations peoples of Canada;

The term “First Nations Languages” means the historical and traditional languages spoken by First Nation peoples.

PURPOSE OF THE ACT

The Minister shall take steps to -

- 1) recognize, protect, promote and preserve the right and freedom of First Nations peoples to utilize their languages;
- 2) encourage and support programs that will enhance the numbers of First Nations people who speak their language by increasing the opportunities to learn their language;
- 3) encourage the use of First Nations languages, by increasing the number of circumstances and situations where First Nations languages are used and supported;
- 4) support the certification of First Nation language teachers and instructors, linguists, interpreters and translators and encourage First Nations languages as a medium of instruction;



- 5) support and encourage the proficiency levels of First Nations peoples in speaking, listening to, reading and writing First Nations languages through curriculum and materials development designed to increase culture, traditions, awareness, knowledge and pride;
- 6) recognize the inherent right of First Nations as self-governing bodies to take action on, and give official status to, First Nation languages for the purposes of conducting local governance activities;
- 7) support the enhancement of First Nations languages so that they can be used in the full range of modern activities and encourage all institutions of elementary, secondary and higher education to include First Nations languages in the curriculum and to grant full academic credit equal to proficiency in the official languages of Canada;
- 8) support the right of First Nations governments to use First Nations languages as the medium of instruction in all schools operated on reserve, or through Tuition Agreement, and funded by the Government of Canada;
- 9) support and foster among First Nations and non-First Nations a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about First Nations languages through media, broadcasting and telecommunications so that multi-lingualism becomes a valued part of Canadian society;
- 10) encourage and support local, municipal and provincial authorities in working with First Nations partners to implement programs which put this Act into effect.

NO RESTRICTIONS

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to abrogate or derogate from the status of any constitutional or other rights in respect of any existing Aboriginal or Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

The right of First Nations peoples to use First Nations languages shall not be restricted in any public proceeding including publicly supported education programs.

COMPLIANCE

The Governor in Council may make regulations pursuant to this Act.



EVALUATION

The Minister shall require an annual progress report to-

- 1) ensure that all actions and measures within the authority of this Act are recognized and performed with respect to the rights, status and privileges as they relate to First Nations language protection under the provision of this Act;
- 2) ensure policies and procedures regarding compliance with the provisions of this Act are implemented and designed in consultation with First Nations language specialists, leadership and governing bodies;
- 3) annually evaluate and make recommendations regarding the compliance with the provisions of this Act in order to ensure adequate progress towards the vision of this legislation;

USE OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH (optional clause)

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to preclude the use of Federal funds to teach English or French to First Nations peoples.

COMING INTO FORCE

This Act shall come into force on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council.

November 20, 2007

