

**School District 27 First Nations Language Review**  
**July 16**  
**Observations and Recommendations from the Questionnaires**  
**and interviews**

Observations and recommendations

1. Vision
  - a. Observation
    - i. All the stakeholders who were interviewed did not have a consist opinion on the First Nations Language Program goals. It was hard for people to define their language classes as part of a larger program.
  - b. Recommendation
    - i. All the stakeholders develop a:
      1. District wide Vision and Goals for the First Nations Program.
      2. Work plan that outlined everyone's role and level of participation.
2. First Nations Language Program
  - a. Recommendations
    - i. Contact the Provincial Aboriginal Branch to explore opportunities to develop the IRP and course outlines or
    - ii. Form a working committee to;
      1. Review existing language IRPs
      2. Develop a First Nations Language framework that has different levels of courses  
or hire a curriculum consultant to work with the Language teachers to develop an IRP.
3. First Nations Language Teachers
  - a. Observations
    - i. All the language teachers were committed to the First Nations Language program.
    - ii. The language teachers had a wide variety of training.
    - iii. All the teachers felt that they could do a better job with:
      1. More professional development
      2. Course outlines and corresponding learning resources
      3. A larger, flexible school based budget
  - b. Recommendations
    - i. The Language Teachers and their students should be given opportunities to share what they have learned.
      1. Language celebrations, local and First Nations radio stations, newspapers

- ii. The Language teachers be offered a way to self assess their skills and develop a personal professional development plan.
- iii. The First Nations Language Program include on-going professional development.
- iv. A portion of the First Nations Targeted Funds be set a side for language projects and professional development.

#### 4. Language Courses

##### a. Observation

- i. The Language teachers have a difficult task organizing their classes into different levels or grades. There is no Integrated Resource Package or course outlines to guide them.
- ii. The teachers have students with varying language skill levels in their classes, whether in an elementary or secondary school. Language teachers have students who are non-speakers, semi-fluent or fluent.
- iii. The assessment of students in a multi-grade, multi-skill classroom is difficult if there are no course goals or benchmarks.
- iv. Without an Integrated Resource Package or Scope and Sequence the teachers find it difficult to offer new, advanced language classes for students who have had four years of language. There are no clear goals from the 4<sup>th</sup> year to the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- v. The majority of teachers focus on writing the First Nations language, not understanding or speaking. Information on second language acquisition are needed.
- vi. (All English courses have Integrated Resource Packages that have been developed by teams of experts over years, paid by the Provincial Government. All the courses in the Elementary and high School have textbooks, teacher guides and assessment tools.)

#### 5. Administration

##### a. Observations

- i. The First Nations Administrator, Coordinator, Principals and Language Teachers would like to assist in planning, implementing and evaluating the language program but there is no clear process.
- ii. The School District staff with expertise in First Nations Language do not have time allocated to program development. (in a large district, problem solving can become a full time job, with no time for language programs)
- iii. The Chilcotin language is represented at the district level but the Secwepemc (Shuswap) language is not.

b. Recommendations

- i The School District First Nations Administration review the job descriptions. The goal would be to eliminate overlap or gaps in program delivery.
- ii That the Shuswap Language be represented at the district level by a teacher fluent and literate in Secwepemctsin.

6. First Nations Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

a. Observation

- i. Most of the Language teachers do not have formal Teacher training. Consequently they will not have had all the courses in the Bachelor of Education or a supervised practicum. Through no fault of their own they will not have studied all the subject areas or practiced a variety of teaching and assessment methods.
- ii. In a Bachelor of Education program practicum, student teachers are made aware of their roles and responsibilities as teachers. These are provided in the BC College of Teachers Document: Standards and Competencies. New teachers learn that they are expected to plan their courses and locate learning resources

b. Recommendations

- i. Provide professional development for all First Nations Language Teachers. (see Pro-d recommendations)
- ii. Review the Standards and Competences Document with all FN Language Teachers
- iii. Provide all FN Language Teachers with the above document
- iv. Develop and implement a thorough job orientation for new staff who do not have formal training. Review the roles, responsibilities and expectations of a teacher. Review the roles, responsibilities and expectations of a teacher.
- v. Evaluate the FN Language Teachers and use the information to focus Professional development ( in accordance with any Collective Agreement that may be in effect)
- vi. Provide a tool for self-evaluation for teaching.
- vii. Formally adopt and implement the 'School District #27 Values- Local First Nations Language Program" self-evaluation checklist.
  - 1. Use the results to assist in making individual workplans

7. Language Curriculum

a. Observations

- i. Individual Language teachers do not share their learning resources

- ii. The school budget is too small to make significant purchases
- iii. The Language teachers need professional develop to learn how to develop and adapt learning resources

b. Recommendations

- i. A forum for sharing be established whereby all the participants obtain new material. If there is a mutual benefit, then Language teachers would be more likely to share material.
- ii. Generic learning resources that can adapted to any language or dialect need to be researched and gathered.
- iii. Yearly workshops on curriculum development be provided.
- iv. Mini lessons, 5 to 15 minutes, could be recorded /video taped. These could be used by teachers who are not fluent speakers or by teachers who don't have an expertise in that area.

8. Unit and lesson planning

a. Observations

- i. Without a an IRP or course outline, the Language teachers find hard to plan **sequential** lessons for 190 days (school year) in the Elementary schools and for a semester in the High Schools.
- ii. Without a lesson plan template or method, the target language is hard to teach, review and assess.

b. Recommendations

- i. The School District recruit/second Teachers who are fluent and literate in Chilcotin, Shuswap or Carrier to develop the program.
- ii. A Language IRP be developed
- iii. The Language teachers would benefit from in-service on lesson planning.
- iv. A sample of lesson plan templates would assist the teachers in planning.
  - 1. One that includes: learning objective, target vocabulary and grammar, activity, learning resources needed and assessment.

9. Teacher placement – Intermediate and High school

a. Observation

- i. Due to the scarcity of First Nations Language teachers, some teachers are placed in classes that they would not normally want to teach. Some teachers are comfortable teaching Primary classes but are not prepared for the demands of an intermediate grade (grade4 to 7 class). Classroom management and discipline become issues. The

District First Nations Coordinator and school principals have assisted the teachers but they cannot stay in the class to maintain discipline.

b. Recommendations

- i. At the start of the year, the Principal assist in student placement.
- ii. Alternate delivery methods whereby the Language teacher is not left alone in a class that they cannot manage should be discussed.
  1. Team teaching, where an experienced teacher assists in planning the lesson and is on hand to help with classroom management. The language teacher is responsible to teach language. Cost is a factor.
  2. Offering multi-grade classes in some schools on alternate years.

10. School First Nations Budget

a. Observations

- i. The Principals and Language teachers have a need for more funds for the First Nations Language classes.
- ii. The Pro D days are Pro-rated. This means a .2 Teacher would only qualify for 1 days out of 5 Pro-D days.

b. Recommendations

- i. A district fund should be set up for larger projects. Only a few schools would be funded each year. Over several years, all the school with programs would benefit.
- ii. The base budget be increased based on a school and per capita formula
- iii. To support language teachers, there needs to be more funds for Professional Development.
  1. Workshops, travel, meals, accommodation, substitute teachers, salary for Pro-D days etc.

11. Implement existing Binders

a. Observation

- i. Very few of the teachers used the curriculum Binders. "I have multi-grade classes and do not want to repeat the same themes," a Language Teachers commented.
- ii. There is no record keeping to record the themes and language (vocabulary and grammar) that have been taught from year to year. There is a possibility that a student may be taught the same lesson in subsequent years.

b. Recommendations

- i. The language teachers should review the Curriculum Binders each year and highlight which topics will be taught to which grades. In a two-grade split, the unit can only be taught every second year. In a 3 grade split, the unit can only be taught every third year

or

- ii. The theme can be enriched or extended to include new language concepts each year.
  1. Fish Traditional use, smoking and drying
  2. Fish Traditional fishing methods
  3. Fish Lifecycle and habitat
  4. Fish Different species and identification
  5. Fish Stories
  6. Fish Arts and crafts

12. District resources

a. Observation

- i. The resource centre is used only by a few language teachers.
- ii. The collection does not have many language idea/activity books
- iii. The collection is many focused on English Social Studies with few materials that can be easily translated.
- iv. There are few books on acquiring a First Nations Language as a second language.
- v. There are few books that cover teacher education.
- vi. There are few Videos or DVD that demonstrate good sound teaching practices.
- vii. The resource centre collection has some dated material that hasn't been borrowed in years.
- viii. There no videos/DVDs that demonstrate a variety of second Language methodologies.
- ix. The resource centre is difficult for rural teacher to use.
  1. Preview material
  2. Borrow material

b. Recommendations

- i. A Learning Resources Working Committee be formed. The committee could include: District First Nations Director or Coordinator, Language Teachers, Educators knowledgeable in Second Language Resources.
- ii. The task would include:
  1. Sort and weed the existing collection
  2. Generate an acquisition list

- a. Professional books for language teachers
- b. Learning Resources that can adapted for student use
- c. DVD/videos on demonstration lessons
- 3. Develop a plan to promote the use of district
- iii. A budget be generated to support 2/3 meetings a year.
  - 1. Substitute teacher, travel, room meals etc
- iv. A Learning Resources budget be established to purchase new material

### 13. Technology

- a. Observations
  - i. Technology is used to assist in language teaching in only a few schools.
  - ii. Teachers expressed an interest in using computers and digital video and photography to teach language but were not clear on what equipment was available or if there were funds for consumable supplies.
- b. Recommendations
  - i. Professional development in using technology be offered
  - ii. That the Chilcotin, Carrier and Shuswap font be downloaded onto all the computers that the students have access to during the day.
  - iii. That equipment be located, listed and shared
  - iv. A budget for consumable supplies be established
    - 1. Colour ink for printers, DVD and CD disks, rechargeable batteries, memory cards for cameras, paper etc.

### 14. Language Profile – Naghtaneqed and Alexis Creek, Dog Creek

- a. Observation
  - i. In school with a very high First Nations population there is an opportunity to increase the use of the First Nations language.
- b. Recommendation
  - i. The Principals and First Nations Language Teachers explore ways to use the First Nations Language outside the classroom.
    - 1. Morning, recess, noon hour and after school announcements
    - 2. Signage
    - 3. Bi-lingual school events

### 15. First Nations Community Outreach/Partner

- a. Observation

- i. The three tribal groups have the same language revitalization goals as the school district
  - b. Recommendation
    - i. That the School District explore partnerships with the First Nations to research and develop language programs and curriculum.

## 16. Language Visibility

- a. Observations
  - i. Several schools had First Nations wall displays
- b. Recommendations
  - i. Language successes need to be shared. Videos of children speaking, doing projects in their language, singing in their language, perhaps burned to DVD and shared or played at different types of gatherings.

## 17 Students

- c. Observation
  - i. All the First Nations students had positive comments about the language classes and wanted the classes to continue.
  - ii. There were mixed responses regarding the language classroom delivery. Some students wanted more speaking and less reading and writing their language.
  - iii. The advanced students wanted new language material.
- d. Recommendations
  - i. The Language Programs validate the First Nations identity in the schools. The students want to learn how to speak their language. The lessons should teach oral fluency as well as literacy. Students should be given opportunities to orally express what they have learned
  - ii. The language classes need definable outcomes so that the students see definite growth from year to year.

## 18 Team work

- e. Observations
  - i. Although all the programs face the same challenges there seems to be no sense of “team” to problem solve or to celebrate successes.
- f. Recommendations
  - i. Periodically, the First Nations Language Teachers should add Team Building activities and problem solving to their gathering.

- 19 Side issues confuse stakeholders, need single agenda meetings
- g. Observations
    - i. All the people connected with the First Nations Language program have the best interests of the program at heart. The many historical and current issues not related to language planning sometimes become the focus of the language meeting. This confuses the stakeholders.
  - h. Recommendations
    - i. Single agenda meetings that focus on the development and implementation of a quality language program.

## 20 First Nations Language Teachers

- i. Questionnaire Summary
  - i. 5 teachers teacher grades 8 to 12
  - ii. Their training and professional development included:
    - 1. Teacher #1
      - a. NITEP
      - b. TPR
      - c. Linguistic courses
      - d. Family
    - 2. Teacher #2
      - a. Chief Atahm 2007 Conference
      - b. (FNL)Teacher Certificate,
      - c. Native Adult Instructor Diploma,
      - d. Computer Information Systems Diploma
    - 3. Teacher #3
      - a. (FNL)Teacher Certificate
    - 4. Teacher #4
      - a. Weekend University Linguistic courses
    - 5. Teacher #5
      - a. Bachelor of Education
- j. First Nations Language Teachers Level of fluency
  - i. I understand when someone speaks to me but I do not speak
  - ii. I understand and speak a little 2
  - iii. I understand and speak my language fluently
  - iv. I understand, speak fluently and read my language
  - v. I understand, speak, read and write my language 6

- k. First Nations Language Elementary Teachers “ What do you like?”
  - i. The willingness of the children to learn
  - ii. Students being respectful
  - iii. I like the fact that most of the students are willing to learn the language.
  
- l. First Nations Language Secondary Teachers “ What do you like?”
  - i. Students like to keep their language alive
  - ii. Being in front teaching, sharing what I know
  - iii. It is fun
  - iv. There is flexibility with the curriculum
  - v. That is our own little “rez”. How eager the younger class are willing to learn.
  
- m. First Nations Language Primary Teachers “ What would you change?”
  - i. Behavior problems, need more Chilcotin teaching resources, more unit plans, more class time
  - ii. Have more curriculum for teaching the language
  - iii. Less structure, Chilcotin font on the school computer
  
- n. First Nations Language Secondary Teachers “ What would you change?”
  - i. Less structure, own classrooms for our 3 languages, different blocks for each language, more storage for our own material
  - ii. I would have a teachers Degree along with my BA in First Nations Studies. I would have increased teaching methodologies
  - iii. All the students who have taken the language before be in one class and have beginners in one class, no matter what grade.
  - iv. Have a permanent First Nations class room and cooking room
  - v. (Classes) structured according to levels
  - vi. To have more computer fonts at our school

First Nations Language Teachers were asked “What kinds of professional development would you find beneficial?”

# Teachers Professional Development Requests

4	Developing a Language Vision and long term goals
3	Developing a year long course outline with learning objectives and activities
5	Reviewing and implementing the existing Language course binders
3	Unit planning. Creating lesson plans with learning objectives, activities, assessment and curriculum
8	Different methods of teaching
3	Adapting existing curriculum to fit language classes
2	Developing curriculum
5	Classroom management
2	Record keeping
4	Student Assessment and report card writing
5	Using projects for language classes
7	Using field trips for language classes
7	Using technology for language classes
7	Planning language events/celebrations
2	Learning to be more fluent in my language
1	Learn to read my language
2	Learn to write my language

## First Nations Language Teacher Survey

	YES	NO	No Answer
Have you read an IRP?	2	3	5
If yes, have tried to implement it?	1, somewhat		

	YES	NO	No answer
Do you use material from the resource centre?	3	3 1 person, it's too far	4

All of the high school students did not complete the survey but the results give some indication of the student fluency level. There is no defined fluency test for understanding, speaking, reading or writing.

Grade 8 students; Level of Fluency	Number of students
I don't understand when someone speaks to me	2
I understand but do not speak	6
I understand and speak	3
Understand, speak and reads	1
I understand, speak, read and write	1

Grade 8: average number of years the students has taken language	7.7
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Grade 9 students: level of fluency	Number of students
I don't understand when someone speaks to me	3
I understand but do not speak	6
I understand and speak	
Understand, speak and reads	2

Grade 9: average number of years the students has taken language	9.75
1 student who did not understand the language had 1 year of instruction	

Grade 10,11,12 students: level of fluency	Number of students
I don't understand when someone speaks to me	2
I understand but do not speak	2
I understand and speak	
Understand, speak and reads	
I understand, speak, read and write	2

Grade 10,11,12: average number of years the students has taken language	2

Language Review: Student questions

Circle the grade you are in        8        9        10        11        12

Circle the number of years you have taken First Nations Language

1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10        11        12

What is your level of fluency? Check **one** of the following.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't understand when someone speaks to me

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand when someone speaks to me, but I do not speak

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and speak my language a little

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and speak my language a lot

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand, speak, and read my language

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand, speak, read and write my language

Is your language spoken in your home? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is yes, about how much time is it spoken? \_\_\_\_\_

Where have you heard your language spoken outside of the school?

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What do you like most about the First Nations Language class?

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What would you change?

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If you were given a choice, what would you like to study or learn about in the language class?

History \_\_\_\_\_ Culture \_\_\_\_\_ Stories \_\_\_\_\_ Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ Art \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor activities \_\_\_\_\_ Politics \_\_\_\_\_ PE \_\_\_\_\_ Everyday events \_\_\_\_\_

Other, explain what you would like to learn in your language

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What kind of events and activities in the community that are done in the language would you attend?

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Language Review: Language Teacher questions

Circle the grade you teach

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12

Circle the number of years you have taught First Nations Language classes

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12

if more, how many years \_\_\_\_\_

What training and professional develop have you had?

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What is your level of fluency? Check **one** of the following.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand when someone speaks to me but I do not speak

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and speak my language a little

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and speak my language fluently

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand, speak, and read my language

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand, speak, read and write my language

Is your language spoken in your home? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is yes, about how much time is it spoken?\_\_\_\_\_

Where have you heard your language spoken outside of the school?

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What do you like most about the First Nations Language class?

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What would you change?

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What kinds of professional develop would you find beneficial?

- Developing a Language vision and long term goals
- Developing a year long course outline with learning objectives and activities
- Reviewing and implementing the existing Language course binders
- Unit and lesson planning. Lesson plans with learning objectives, activities, assessment and curriculum
- Different methods of teaching
- Adapting existing curriculum to fit language classes
- Developing curriculum
- Classroom management
- Record keeping
- Student assessment and writing report cards
- Using projects for language classes
- Using field trips for language classes
- Using technology for language classes
- Planning language events/celebrations
- Learning to be more orally fluent in my language
- Learning to read my language

\_\_\_\_\_ Learning to write my language

Have you read the provincial Language Integrated Resource Package (IRP)?

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, have you tried to implement it? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you familiar with any of the provincial IRPs? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which ones. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a resource books that has helped you plan and deliver your courses? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which books would you recommend for all teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you use any teacher or student books from the Resource Center?

\_\_\_\_\_

What additional subjects would you like to teach in the language class?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What the main challenges in teaching language classes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Principals Interview Questions

1. What are the strengths of the First Nations language program?
2. What are areas of concern?
3. What kinds of professional development are needed?
4. What kinds of learning resources are needed?