ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
Indigenous Languages Initiative

National Engagement Sessions Report

December 5, 2017

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES INITIATIVE

Report on the National Engagement Sessions

November 8, 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In preparation for the co-development of legislation for an Indigenous Languages Act, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) held a series of engagement sessions across the country from June to October, 2017 with more than 500 Regional Chiefs, Chiefs, Councillors, Elders, fluent speakers, knowledge keepers, language champions and activists, Indigenous scholars and linguists attending. The Assembly of First Nations undertook the AFN Indigenous Languages Initiative Engagement Sessions in keeping with the Assembly of First Nations Executive Motion, supported by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages and resolutions 06-2015 and 01-2015. This report provides a brief synopsis of the extensive feedback received at those sessions and summarizes the key points which emerged. The report will be used to guide those at the AFN who will be co-developing the legislation with the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council.

Indigenous peoples in what is now Canada have been drawing attention to the state of Indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve our languages for at least seventy years. Indigenous languages preservation, revitalization and education is now on the Government of Canada's legislative and policy agenda with the intention that our languages will be maintained now and into the future. Over the past few years, certain events have given rise to renewed optimism. The newly elected federal government has promised to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which contains several articles that support the recovery, revitalization, preservation, and the teaching of and in the Indigenous languages of Canada. In addition, the 'Ministerial mandate letters', duly signed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and the Prime Minister's December 6, 2016 announcement of the Indigenous Languages Act to be co-developed with Indigenous peoples made the newly formed federal government's commitment to Indigenous peoples clear. Another event which gives rise for renewed optimism is the release of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in December 2015. Together, these events along with the work of language champions and activists, have brought us to the present as we co-develop an Indigenous Languages Act.

To begin, we provide some background on the Indigenous Languages Initiative and outline the structure and content of the engagement sessions. We provide general information on First Nations languages and discuss the current state of our languages including number of speakers, a description of policies and practices which have affected our languages, a review of some of the many positive

language initiatives in which communities are engaged and some examples of the role that legislation can play.

As we traveled to sessions from one end of the country to the other, we heard about diverse experiences and numerous hopes and dreams for language. Although there were many differences in experience and some differing views, there was also much consensus between participants at the various sessions. As well, it became clear that while some people spoke directly about what they wanted to see in the Act itself, many spoke about issues relating to the necessary language policies and other matters which will come into play with implementation of the legislation; these are equally important. For that reason, we divide Section 2 into two parts: legislation and policies. Section 3 provides additional information that will need to be considered if implementation of the legislation is to be successful.

As for the legislation itself, the **goals** are very clear: Legislation must support the rebuilding of **all** Indigenous languages, from recovery, reclamation, revitalization and maintenance, back to **normalization**. The rebuilding of languages cannot be done in isolation; they must be restored along with Indigenous knowledges and worldviews, the relationship with the land, values and intergenerational relationships. This work must be undertaken with the direct engagement of those who have experience and knowledge with the context of Indigenous language revitalization. Legislation must support people of all ages in the ability to use their language in all domains; this must be accessible to all Indigenous people.

There are four essential points of inclusion:

1. **Recognition.** The Indigenous languages of this land have existed since time immemorial and pre-exist Canada; they must be recognized, protected, respected, valued, promoted, acknowledged, supported and used.
2. **Indigenous Rights and Control.** It is the constitutional and inherent right of each Indigenous government to direct, maintain and develop their own language and culture (Indigenous control of Indigenous languages).
3. **Access.** All Indigenous languages need to be accessible to all Indigenous people regardless of where they reside.
4. **Establishment of a Language Structure(s).** Legislation must mandate the establishment of a language body or bodies that orchestrate the following four critical roles: government accountability, funding, support for language learning, and public promotion and awareness.

With respect to policies to support the legislation, we discuss general policies and policies related to recognition, access and creation of a language structure(s). Of particular importance are policies related to funding, as the legislation must establish ongoing, sustained, consistent, appropriate funding to recover, reclaim, revitalize, maintain and normalize all the Indigenous languages of these lands.

Finally, we discuss information on language recovery, reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and normalization including: culture, identity and the land; healing and decolonization; community

programming; educational programming; training, certification, accreditation, and capacity building; resource and technology development, storage and protection; information sharing; promotion and mobilization; and urban and off-reserve populations.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND ON LEGISLATION INITIATIVE AND ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

In 2014, in his speech to the Chiefs-in-Assembly, National Chief Perry Bellegarde firmly committed to make the revitalization, recovery and maintenance of First Nations languages his priority. In 2015, the priority of First Nations languages revitalization featured prominently in the Assembly of First Nations *Closing the Gap* document. In his speech to the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly on December 6, 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed to the enactment of an Indigenous Languages Act ("Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Speech", 2017), in keeping with the mandate letters that he, as the Prime Minister, had given to his Ministers of Canadian Heritage and Indian Affairs, respectively. In June 2017, a joint statement from Canadian Heritage, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council expressed that they will: "Work collaboratively, transparently and on a distinctions-basis to co-develop national First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation languages legislation whose content will reflect the distinct geographic, political, legislative, and cultural contexts impacting language revitalization, recovery, preservation, protection, maintenance, and promotion." (Canadian Heritage, 2017, June 15). These four co-developing parties are working towards introduction of the legislation in Parliament in 2018. Following this statement, the Assembly of First Nations convened several engagement sessions to seek input from First Nations as the legislation is co-developed. Youth, Elders, Language experts, Chiefs, Education administrators, culture and language administrators and teachers attended the sessions. Engagement sessions were held as follows:

Session	Dates (2017)	Location	Participants
British Columbia and Yukon	June 22 & 23	Vancouver, BC	157
Pre-AFN Assembly Session	July 24	Regina, SK	83
Quebec	September 6-7	Quebec City, QC	39
Ontario	September 13-14	Toronto, ON	96
Prairies (AB, SK, MB) & NWT	September 20-21	Edmonton, AB	92
Atlantic (NS, NB, PEI, NL)	October 11-12	Halifax, NS	70
National Roll Up	October 18-19	Ottawa, ON	100

1.2 QUESTIONS AND STRUCTURE OF SESSIONS

Each engagement session included panel sessions to provide information to participants on the current state of Indigenous language initiatives in Canada and on issues regarding the co-development process such as what legislation can achieve. A comprehensive listing of these panel sessions can be found in the appendices. These were interspersed with break-out sessions to invite input from participants. The breakout sessions were structured around a number of key questions.

DAY 1 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1. What do you want for your language?
2. In your experience what have you learned that is a successful example of language revitalization?
3. What are the ideas and insights from today that would work for your community?

DAY 2 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1. How can an Indigenous Languages Act support your First Nation, language group or organization to achieve what you want for your language(s)?
2. What are the necessary components of an Indigenous Languages Act?
3. Once the legislation is passed, what are the components of a structure required to carry out what is needed to support language revitalization in the communities. For example: foundation, council, commissioner, institute, other?
4. What could be the roles & responsibilities of these mechanisms? For example: planning, research, evaluation, reporting/accountability, equitable financing, governance/oversight, other?
5. What are the structures & mechanisms that exist in your region that support language revitalization?
6. How would the proposed National or Regional mechanisms relate to these existing entities?

In each location, there were several break-out groups. Facilitators in each group led the participants through each question and there was opportunity for participants to contribute other topics to the discussion.

The purpose of the national roll-up session in Ottawa was to present a preliminary draft of the final report which included a summary of the input from all of the engagement sessions and recommendations for the legislation. The session was well-attended, and a majority of the participants had previously attended one of the regional sessions. This allowed for revisiting some of the questions from the engagement sessions at a greater level of detail. The questions from the wrap-up session comprised the following.

1. Based on the preliminary report from the engagement sessions, is there anything you feel is missing or needs special attention for more discussion?

2. What advice do you have about how to develop principles, content, and process for the proposed federal Indigenous languages legislation?

DAY 2: WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Next Steps. There was one question in the engagement sessions that requires further discussion: "Once the legislation is passed, what are the components of a structure that are needed to support language revitalization in the communities. For example: foundation, council, commissioner, institute, other?"

1. What do you think should be included in the role of a commissioner or commissioners? Such as:
   - Accountability – making sure that funds are sustainable, uninterrupted, effective...
   - Educating public service about Indigenous languages and ways to effectively work with Indigenous governments and Indigenous language experts in the community
   - Advising governments, institutions on Indigenous languages and needs
   - Engaging all ministries to initiate programs in their areas to support Indigenous language development
2. What kind of structure(s) work best considering the breadth and scope of restoring Indigenous languages across the country?
3. How can a foundation support the work of communities and individuals to restore Indigenous languages?
4. Do you have some examples of regional structures that support Indigenous languages? If so, what do they do?
5. How can those who do not reside in their home communities be supported? Are there structures in urban centres that can be supported or developed to serve this population?
6. Is there a role for the AFN in implementation of the legislation?

1.3 BACKGROUND ON FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES

Language **families** are groups of related languages that originated from a common source language and may include from one to several languages. **Languages** in turn may include mutually intelligible **dialects**. In addition to the Inuit language family and the languages of the Métis peoples (Michif), there are 9 distinct families of First Nations languages in Canada: Algonquian, Iroquoian, Ktunaxa (Kootenay), Na-Dene (Athabaskan and Tlingit), Salishan, Siouan, Tsimshianic, Wakashan, and X̲aad Kil/X̲aayda Kil (Haida). This division of language families is generally accepted by both Indigenous peoples and linguists though the designated names may vary.

As for a list of the individual Indigenous languages in Canada, an agreed-upon list does not exist. In sources which enumerate languages, the number of languages ranges from approximately 60 (Rice, 2016) to approximately 89 (Norris, 2016) or sometimes even more. The reason for the discrepancy stems primarily from inherent problems with the definitions *language* and *dialect.* While "mutually intelligible" (where speakers of one dialect understand speakers of another) may seem like a reasonable rubric with which to divide languages and dialects, in practice the boundaries between the two are often blurred. For example, there are cases of languages where there is a dialect continuum over a wide geographical area. While neighbouring dialects may be clearly mutually intelligible, dialects at either end of the continuum may not be very mutually intelligible with each other. Second, self-designated cultural groupings may not correspond to linguistic groupings. For example, two groups of people who speak mutually intelligible dialects might consider themselves culturally or politically distinct and therefore speakers of separate languages. Conversely, a single cultural group may encompass two distinct languages. Further, there can be discrepancies in the names of the languages or dialects themselves, whether self-designated endonyms or names applied by outsiders.[1] These classification issues will need to be addressed in the development of language legislation with the full participation of Indigenous peoples.

1.4 STATE OF OUR LANGUAGES

1.4.1 Current status

According to the 2016 census, there are 213, 225 mother-tongue speakers of Aboriginal languages[2] and 137, 515 individuals report speaking an Aboriginal language most often at home (Statistics Canada, 2017). The majority of languages have low numbers of speakers (fewer than 2000 speakers) with a small number of languages having higher numbers of speakers.

There are, however, limitations to the census data. First, some Indian reserves were only partially enumerated or not enumerated at all (14 in the 2016 census; Statistics Canada, 2017b). Second, many Indigenous individuals are often conflicted when asked about their mother tongue. For example, while many people were mother tongue speakers of a language before attending residential school, they may no longer consider themselves mother tongue speakers although they may understand the language. Third, because the census language question requires a write-in answer, many variants of language names are given, which results in a number of responses being categorized by the language

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[1] See Norris (2016) for a detailed discussion of these issues.

[2] The census question is: "What is the language that this person **first learned** at home **in childhood** and **still understands**?"

family rather than the language ("not included elsewhere) or simply as "Aboriginal languages, not otherwise specified" (735 individuals in the 2016 census; Statistics Canada, 2017a).

In order to ascertain a more accurate picture of number of speakers per language, First Peoples' Cultural Council in British Columbia has developed a system of collecting information from communities on these issues. They began this work by first gaining province-wide agreement through active engagement by First Nations on the names and boundaries of their language. Information provided by community members (who have a thorough understanding of the language context in their own communities) is published in a status report every four years (see, e.g., Gessner et al, 2014). These status reports have been invaluable to communities for their own language planning needs and have provided a baseline to track and measure progress of revitalization throughout the province. A nationwide system could supplement census data and assist with implementation of the legislation.

1.4.2   Review of policies and practices

Within each language, there is a range of unique circumstances and levels of vitality. Some dialects of a language could need more support than others and this needs to be ascertained and given consideration. Undeniably, **every** Indigenous language in Canada is in a critical state in terms of the percentage of the population who can speak their language. This includes even the handful of languages with larger numbers of speakers. How did we get to this state?

The Government of Canada has led and carried out an intentional policy to assimilate Indigenous peoples. Of course, this policy is best known from the residential school system (see Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). However, it is crucial to understand that it wasn't only schools that discharged this policy. The Sixties Scoop and ongoing practices within social services and the justice system have separated families and interrupted the intergenerational transmission of languages from parents and grandparents to children. All of these things have been part of a larger plan to disrupt and disconnect Indigenous peoples. Further, because of these government policies, Indigenous people, individually and as a community, have taken this upon themselves as a belief system and have perpetuated assimilation within their own families. It is incumbent upon Canada to acknowledge that the legislation is one step in making redress for the injustices of the past which continue to the present day.

1.4.3   Current initiatives

Despite the assimilationist polices of the past and present, Indigenous people have not remained idle victims. Indigenous languages are still here due to persistent and ongoing efforts to maintain and revitalize them through a wide array of maintenance, revitalization and recovery projects. Individuals and communities have, despite the lack of sufficient funding and multiple institutional obstacles, taken it upon themselves to develop creative and innovative programs to ensure that Indigenous languages will continue to exist. The language success stories shared at the engagement sessions are too numerous to mention, but we highlight a few here.

Many communities provide language to young children through early childhood education, including full immersion 'nests' based on the Māori model from New Zealand. Some nests have grown into immersion schools, such as Chief Atahm School for the Secwepemctsin language in British Columbia. Other successful immersion schools have been established such as St. Frances School, a Cree immersion school in Saskatchewan, bursting at the seams with 543 students, or the Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Immersion School in Nova Scotia. Many band schools provide some form of language education, despite per-student funding levels which are lower than those provided to public schools. The Cree School Board in Québec is an example of effective infrastructure to support language education in multiple communities. Many Indigenous post-secondary institutions offer options for adult learners such as the University nuhelot'įne thaiyots'į nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills in Alberta which reclaimed a residential school to create their own indigenous-run institution.

Outside of the education system, language success stories abound. Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa is a community-based organization in Ontario that creates speakers of Kanyen'keha (Mohawk) through an intensive adult immersion program. Self-driven adult learners are developing proficiency through Master/Mentor-Apprentice immersion methods in many places. Language is being returned to families through individual efforts such as the young man from Tyendinaga, Ontario who learned his language on his own and taught it to his whole family. Community-based initiatives are widespread, such as documentation of speakers, construction of pedagogical resources (for both children and adults) and language classes offered to all ages. There are fantastic examples of innovation, such as the creation of the SENĆOŦEN orthography in British Columbia or the development of Oneida Sign Language in Ontario. Nations have also developed their own language declarations and long-term strategic language plans to ensure the future of their languages, such as the Chippewas of the Thames.

The Assembly of First Nations has long advocated for language revitalization and recovery. From substantive work in the late 1980s to calling for the Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures (2005) that advised the Minister of Canadian Heritage on a national languages strategy, the AFN in 2007 finished more substantive pieces including a costing plan. In 2015, the AFN released the *Closing the Gap* document and re-established the Chief's Committee on Languages. First Nations peoples in Canada have reached out worldwide to other Indigenous peoples to learn and share best practices, and have been actively involved in international initiatives such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and have participated in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the UN Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Languages in 2016. It is important that the legislation recognize and support existing efforts as well as provide the means to expand and grow efforts for all Indigenous languages in Canada.

1.5 ROLE OF LEGISLATION

Legislation can be a powerful tool which can enhance a language's status. You can make a language official, but what does that really mean? Care will need to be paid to ensure that legislation enables the desired results. There are numerous examples to consider from around the world.

Hebrew is probably the best-known example of a language that has been revived, put to use and made modern for Israel. It has been given a place in society; this is key to the survival of any language. In the United Kingdom, both Manx and Welsh are experiencing unprecedented growth due to strategical educational and governmental policies. In New Zealand and Hawaii, the Indigenous languages of Māori and Hawaiian are supported with policies at the national and state level respectively. However, most of these examples represent a single language being supported by policy in a single place. The diversity of languages in Canada does present unique challenges which the legislation will need to address. The 2003 National Language Policy Framework in South Africa could be instructive here. Like Canada, South Africa is dealing with multiple languages and had similar policies of Indigenous language eradication.

Within Canada, official language policies have been adopted in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Since adoption, numerous hurdles and challenges have been identified. Co-developers of the legislation are strongly advised to examine these in the enactment of national legislation.

2 WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY AT THE ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS? WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Indigenous Language Goals: Legislation must support the rebuilding of **all** Indigenous languages, from recovery, reclamation, revitalization and maintenance, back to **normalization**. The rebuilding of languages cannot be done in isolation; they must be restored along with Indigenous knowledges and worldviews, the relationship with the land, values and intergenerational relationships. Legislation must support people of all ages able to use their language in all domains; this must be accessible to all Indigenous people.

This support begins at the grassroots level with community- and language-specific assessments using tools such as Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale. For example, where only Elders speak the language, documenting the language and mentor-apprentice programs are the suggested logical interventions. Where the language is spoken by adults who are in their 40s and 50s, language nests are the suggested intervention. Over the past ten years, however, Indigenous scholars and language activists have learned that multifaceted approaches work best; this means that many interventions in many domains in one community are necessary. Local language strategists, therefore benefit greatly from education regarding current strategies. Strategies that meet community-specific language needs are then matched to community goals with the most appropriate strategies for the respective situations of the language. This is best supported by institutional, regional and national infrastructures.

2.1 LEGISLATION ON INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Recognition

1. The Indigenous languages of this land have existed since time immemorial and preexist Canada.
2. Every language indigenous to Canada must be recognized, protected, respected, valued, promoted, acknowledged, supported and used.
3. Legislation must recognize languages, give communities the tools to strengthen their languages and support communities to pass their own laws to govern their languages.
4. Indigenous languages in Canada are recovering from the devastating policies and practices of the federal, provincial and territorial governments, along with the churches which sought to eliminate and destroy Indigenous languages. There is a need to redress these actions.

All Indigenous languages in Canada are at a critical stage of endangerment. Time is of the essence to restore and revitalize languages.

Indigenous Rights and Control

It is the constitutional and inherent right of each Indigenous government to direct, maintain and

develop their own language and culture (Indigenous control of Indigenous languages). Indigenous languages pre-existed the creation of Canada and can be recognized as an existing Aboriginal right under section 35(1) of the Constitution Act.

1. Legislation must be enabling and not controlling and provide the supports needed to make achieving the above goals possible.
2. Legislation must align with inherent self-governing agreements based on rights, jurisdictions and authorities.
3. There is a need to address the different governance arrangements across the country: treaty, non-treaty, self-government and non-self-government.
4. The ownership and intellectual property rights of each language must be protected.

Access

1. All Indigenous languages need to be accessible to all Indigenous people regardless of where they reside or where they require service in their language.
2. Every Indigenous person has the right to receive an education – early childhood education, daycare, Head Start programs, preschool, elementary, secondary, post-secondary and adult education in an Indigenous language.
3. There must be right of access to language in sign languages, and language for all individuals with disabilities or special abilities.

Establishment of a Language Structure(s)

Legislation must mandate the establishment of a language body or bodies that orchestrate the following four critical roles: government accountability, funding, support for language learning and public promotion and awareness.[3]

1. Ensure that each Indigenous language is recognized and that all government institutions are compliant with the terms of the legislation.
2. Provide and distribute long-term, guaranteed funding to carry out the intent of the legislation.
3. Support the diverse needs of diverse communities with capacity building and the sharing of language resources to assist with the recovery, reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and normalization of Indigenous languages.
4. Promote each of the official Indigenous languages to increase their status in Indigenous communities and in Canadian society.

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[3] Refer to the following section for suggestions on how these roles could be implemented.

2.2 POLICIES TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

General Policies

1. Ensure legislation aligns with Articles 13,14, and 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) which Canada has adopted, and implement the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), including Calls to Action 10, 13 – 17, 61, 84 - 85.

2. Establish working, collaborative, aligned partnerships with shared goals to support the recovery, reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and normalization of all Indigenous languages in Canada from Indigenous worldviews.

3. Establish working, collaborative partnerships between Indigenous-led governments and provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, federal ministries, the private sector, Indigenous and non-Indigenous post-secondary institutions, and cultural institutions.

4. Foster cross-jurisdictional partnerships (across provincial and territorial boundaries and with Native American tribes and entities in the USA) to allow for sharing and networking to promote revitalization, reclamation, maintenance and educational initiatives with the same or similar language groups.

5. Make provisions to shift the past colonial attitude of wardship toward Indigenous people by the public service. Actively shift from eradication of the language, culture and values of Indigenous people to respecting and honouring Indigenous culture and language throughout Canada.

6. Put interim measures in place to safeguard and not disrupt the fragile and valuable efforts of communities and schools to protect their languages.

Policies Related to Recognition

1. At this time, there are different numbers of Indigenous languages reported and there are discrepancies with the way Statistics Canada, archeologists, anthropologists and linguists **count, name, identify and locate Indigenous languages**. To determine the list of languages in British Columbia, First Peoples' Cultural Council undertook a comprehensive community consultation process. The list of 34 languages indigenous to B.C. is thus clearly defined and accepted by community members; it also uses preferred endonyms. In the co-development of the legislation, there must be a **community consultation process** in order to determine the languages designated for official status.
   a. It is crucial that the names of the languages should be put forward by and accepted by Indigenous people.
   b. Existing lists of languages are great starting points, but the lists should form the basis of nation/community consultation in order to finalize a list.
   c. The principle of unity, rather than division, should be adopted. With respect to dialect vs. language divisions, we should aim to identify language groups, which of course encompass a variety of dialects.
   d. Principles should apply to all languages equally, regardless of size of language or geographic spread. Certain languages (e.g., Cree and Anishinaabemowin) should be given

special attention because the wide geographic spread, the number of dialects and differing levels of endangerment amongst the dialects result in some classification systems treating dialects as separate languages. The majority of languages are in British Columbia; the diversity and smaller speaker populations should not be a reason to not support these languages.

e. In the process, it must be made very clear that what people call their language will not negatively affect funding; funding on a per-language basis is not advisable. On the contrary, coming together under a common language name will facilitate resource sharing among mutually intelligible varieties and will benefit all dialects of a language.

2. Canada must respect the unique orthographies of Indigenous languages and permit individuals to register their Indigenous name on birth certificates, status cards, social insurance cards and citizenship documents.

3. Canada must collaborate with Indigenous people to restore place names in Indigenous languages. Indigenous names and orthographies should be used on maps and added to road signage. For example, all Canadians should be taught that the name for Canada comes from the Huron word *kanata* meaning 'village' or 'settlement' (Canadian Heritage, 2017, August 11).

4. There is a need to afford Indigenous languages prominence through a term such as 'original languages'. The emphasis of the English and French languages as "official" obfuscates the importance of Indigenous languages, which are predominantly categorized as "other" or "heritage".

Policies Related to Access

1. Ensure that Indian Act status or other citizenship (or lack thereof) does not prevent access to language. Currently, access to programming can be limited for a variety of reasons. One can hold Indian status in a band but not band membership due to band laws on membership. One can be born into a language community but not hold band status or membership. One can have limited access and status due to birth, e.g., offspring of a parent, usually a mother, who lost status due to marriage and regained status via Bill C31. Program funding to bands may be limited only to band members who reside on reserve. Members who move away for purposes of education, health, economics, social services, law, family breakdown, violence, divorce or housing needs may not be able to access programs and services that are federally funded unless a band makes provision for these members. All Indigenous people must be able to access their language regardless of age and residence.

Policies Related to Funding

1. Establish long-term, sustainable, consistent, appropriate funding to recover, reclaim, revitalize, maintain and normalize all the Indigenous languages of these lands now called Canada.

   a. Transfer funds directly to Indigenous communities. Determine processes, amounts and procedures that result in equitable distribution of funds based on the status of each language and the goals of each community.

b. Give authority to Indigenous communities to arrange partnerships with existing institutions when and how they see fit.

c. Provide funds to day cares, early childhood centres, preschools, primary, elementary, middle schools, secondary schools, colleges, institutes, technical schools, pre-employment programs and post-secondary institutions to offer Indigenous language programming. The funds available must be divided equitably between both Indigenous schools and public schools.

d. Provide opportunities for funding for innovations, special projects, and short-term objectives with a focus on evaluation and sharing what is learned.

e. Direct funding opportunities to support targeted populations such as: in corrections for individuals who are incarcerated; to children in the care of social services both adopted and in foster care; to the health care system to provide language services to the elderly and others requiring care. In addition, fund sign language programs and programs to support individuals with disabilities or special abilities.

f. Provide secure funding so that those who do not reside in their home lands have access to language learning and maintenance of their heritage.

g. Provisions must be put in place for Indigenous people to learn their respective languages including paid leaves of absence from their places of employment.

h. **Funding must <u>not</u> be prioritized** based on principles such as languages which have the greatest number of speakers or languages which have the greatest level of endangerment. **All Indigenous languages must be supported** at the level required to recover, reclaim, revitalize, maintain and normalize them.

Policies Related to the Establishment of a Language Structure(s)

Concerns Regarding Language Structure(s)

Across the country, there was no clear consensus on the best type of structure or structures required. There was, however, strong agreement that any national or regional structures must be extremely focused with minimal bureaucracy. Session participants do not want any structure(s) to drain the funding from community efforts. Communities must lead the recovery, reclamation, revitalization and maintenance and normalization of Indigenous languages. Structures must be designed to support what communities say they need. Community members must direct the process to achieve their vision and goals for their language. Like replacing commissioner with "language keeper", session participants advocated for indigenizing the names of any structures (e.g., foundation, institute, council). Further, participants intend that any structures be Indigenous-led. Leadership and decision makers need to speak (or be active learners of) an Indigenous language, have experience with and knowledge of Indigenous worldviews, have a deep understanding of the effects of colonization and colonial practices and have direct knowledge of the needs of language communities. Finally, four separate structures are not necessarily required; a hybrid model or models might work. The key is that the functions of the four roles of accountability, development, support and promotion are achieved and are carried out from an Indigenous perspective.

TRC Call to Action Number 15: Accountability Through a Commissioner

1. No consensus was achieved regarding the best structure to ensure accountability by governments and institutions in Canada for the Indigenous Languages Act. If there is an Indigenous Language Commission, this commission must embody Indigenous approaches to our languages, uphold the Indigenous Languages Act for the benefit of Indigenous peoples and the revitalization, recovery and maintenance of our languages, as was the intent of call number 15 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. A 'commission' and its 'commissioner(s)' would be language keeper(s). It was stated that any Commissioner should be Indigenous, and ideally have or be working toward a level of conversational proficiency in an Indigenous language. This role would enshrine the legislation with permanency and ensure Indigenous oversight, while not displacing existing Indigenous entities. The funding of this person or body should not affect the core funding to language programming. Several key responsibilities would be upheld.
    a. Hold government accountable to the implement the Act.
    b. Resolve policy barriers throughout government.
    c. Establish collaborative partnerships and relationships between federal ministries, provincial and territorial ministries of education, post-secondary bodies (federal, provincial and territorial), justice (corrections and law, federal and provincial), health (federal, provincial and territorial), early childhood (Aboriginal Head Start, provincial and territorial initiatives) and treaty negotiations.
    d. Establish collaborative partnerships between federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments.
    e. Establish collaborative working relationships with Indigenous organizations (Friendship Centres, cultural centres, AFN, treaty groups, and other Indigenous entities).
    f. Manage issues dealing with language names and demarcations of traditional territories (mapping, place names, signage) and make sure those are understood, accepted and known.
    g. Work with people and communities to help government serve Indigenous people in a way that is respectful and authentic from an Indigenous perspective.
    h. Report on the achievement of the objectives of the Indigenous languages legislation.
    i. Indigenize processes related to implementation of the legislation.

Foundation: Development

1. A structure is needed to fill the role of managing additional funding for Indigenous languages, similar to a foundation. It should be noted that there was limited support for a foundation, and that a key concern was that it would continue the requirement of application-based funding, and that it would not be able to provide the funding amounts necessary for the work needed. A financial structure must have long-term, equitable, predictable sustainable funding and a clear mandate for supporting language communities. Discussions of a foundation outlined responsibility for the following roles.
    a. Develop leadership, networks and innovation.

b. Promote and build connections.

c. Manage endowment. Fundraise and promote to private sector.

d. Disburse scholarships, bursaries and grants for innovative projects.

e. Indigenize processes related to development.

Regional Institutes: Support

1. Structures are needed to provide communities with the support they need to recover, reclaim, revitalize, maintain and normalize their languages, specifically related to capacity building and language resource management and sharing. These may be similar to an institute or to a regional structure that already exists such as the Anishnaabek, Mushkegowuk, Onkwehon:we Language Commission of Ontario (AMO), the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre, Yukon Native Language Centre, the First Peoples' Cultural Council in British Columbia, various cultural centres, and others. Learn the work of these existing structures to create regional support structures across the country. Each region has unique and different circumstances and needs. These regional institutes would carry out several responsibilities.

   a. Document, digitize and provide archives for language data.

   b. Lead and assist with language planning.

   c. Provide training and professional development.

   d. Assist communities with capacity-building and help communities to increase domains where language is spoken.

   e. Research.

   f. Implement Indigenous knowledge.

Council: Promotion

1. A structure is needed to promote Indigenous languages and create public awareness in the spirit of reconciliation. This might be something like a council with representation from each language. Funding towards such an entity must not detract from the funding required for revitalization efforts. A council would discharge various responsibilities.

   a. Promote Indigenous languages and culture.

   b. Promote all Indigenous languages as living languages; shift the focus away from endangerment.

   c. Promote Indigenous languages as being used in the contemporary world – foster the contemporary, creative development of language and cultural expression and create space for creative young minds to bring language into new places (films, television programs, radio, computer applications, etc.).

   d. Promote Indigenous languages with non-Indigenous communities. This is an initiating role. Because Indigenous people have been so invisible to Canadians, it is necessary to motivate Canadians towards action.

   e. Work with museums and public institutions to bring Indigenous language, culture and knowledge to museum exhibits and other knowledge transfer arenas.

Other Roles

The report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) calls on post-secondary institutions to act. Their main role should be one of capacity building, knowledge transfer and knowledge mobilization. There needs to be indigenization of program design, degree design, curriculum, instructional practices and assessment. Institutions must figure out how to develop an Indigenous language department that crosses university faculties so that it can draw from linguistics, second language learning, community development, planning, policy development and governance, early childhood education and education.

There are important roles for the AFN and other Indigenous national, provincial, territorial and regional organizations. Organizations must support the language community's efforts to carry out the work to normalize their languages. Organizations, too, must be directed by the community language experts. They must be strong advocates and knowledge mobilizers for all the Indigenous languages in all sectors.

Finally, the community has the most important role to play. Communities will carry out community language plans, community language programs (connecting to the land and culture), language education programming, curriculum development, and increasing the sustainability of all their language programs. Work must extend beyond language teaching to things like mapping place names, creating other resources (social studies, science, history) and collecting historical documents about language. Knowledge mobilization is critical: people need to share and act on what they are learning. Ultimately, the goal is **normalization** of all Indigenous languages: the creation of proficient speakers so that Indigenous languages are used first in all domains at all times, and doing so is considered normal.

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3 Information on language recovery, reclamation, revitalization, maintenance & normalization

3.1 Culture, identity and the land

Language learning is more than learning words and phrases; it is the voice of culture and the land. Language learning is also about learning our worldview, culture, relationships, customs, beliefs and traditions. These are housed in our many story forms, conversation, songs, dances, oration, prayers, greetings, art forms and teachings. Our language helps us to know who we are and affirms our identity. Language learning needs to take place in our family and community activities, land-based activities and governance activities.

It is especially important to connect young people to the roots of their languages and identity. Land-based learning experiences should not be an 'add-on' to the curriculum. Instead, they should be made a practice in the curriculum because doing so provides opportunities to learn through a strong cultural lens. It is difficult to work in silos; separating language, culture, spirituality and education is a colonial approach. Nevertheless, we must be aware of different levels of attachment to culture in different communities and respect that everyone's attachment is different.

3.2 Healing and decolonization

Language learning and identity reunification can be sources of healing. Schooling – residential schools, day schools, public schools, technical schools – were sources of disrupting Indigenous language use as a natural process. These institutions made us ashamed to speak our languages and parents were made to believe that their languages would harm their children and keep them from succeeding. Language revitalization can be used to help mitigate other issues such as addictions; people with a strong sense of language have better physical and mental health.

We must build decolonization practices and positive language promotion into all language programs and services program at all age levels. Language learners must become conscious of how they view their language in order to change the negative messages to positive ones. It is healing to see the strength and beauty of the languages and their world views, and to understand that Indigenous languages can teach us about the world and the universe.

Furthermore, anyone working on planning, designing, delivering or promoting Indigenous language programs must also decolonize their thinking and beliefs about Indigenous languages and Indigenous learners and their capacity for learning.

3.3 COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING; DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Each community is at a different stage of their language use. Legislation, policies and their implementation must be able to respond to the different circumstances, challenges and perspectives of each language community. Support begins where each community is at; there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to language restoration and revitalization. There is a crucial need for language planning so each community can determine the level of language use among its members, where and when the language is used, what resources are available, and what the community wants to achieve with their language learning. Communities face different barriers to language learning. For example, some communities are remote and have limited services, some are close to urban centers and have competing demands on time, some have members who work outside the community, some have few or no remaining speakers, some have conflicts due to different orthographies or grammar codification in different dialects. Smaller and larger communities sharing the same language are often in competition, and some have conflicts over best approaches.

As mentioned in the background section above, language immersion for all ages and language abilities is the most effective way of revitalizing languages. However, immersion requires fluent language teachers, who are often an aging population with health issues, transportation issues and are lacking the necessary credentials or clearances to work with young children. There can also be issues with unions. Dialect differences can also be of concern for families if teachers speak a different dialect than the children they are teaching. Even when children are in immersion, they usually don't have anyone to speak with at home or in the community, so adult programs are also needed.

Adult immersion programs are extremely successful when learners are committed and have the resources to support themselves while they are learning. Communities are challenged to find financial resources for adult immersion as funding organizations tend to think "younger the better" for language learning. The Master/Mentor-Apprentice immersion method, originally developed for California Indigenous languages, has been particularly successful for older learners and particularly useful for those preparing to be teachers of the language. It requires a team of at least two (a fluent speaker and a language learner(s)) to work together in intensive immersion. It demands a commitment by all parties to meet several times per week and it requires guidance and facilitation by someone knowledgeable and trained in this approach to monitor and support the team. This approach has been especially beneficial to those identified as silent language speakers (those who understand the language but don't speak it); it has also been beneficial to fluent speakers who continue to be traumatized by their ill treatment in the school system for speaking their language.

For very young children, language immersion through language nests is an effective program strategy especially when it involves more than one generation and includes parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents and siblings. They are a primary strategy to counter the policies that forced separation of the generations. Nests are particularly successful when language learning takes place as close as possible to a family/community setting and participants can hear and use the language in a natural way. Language immersion produces fluent speakers of the Indigenous language and they have no difficulty learning the dominant language, thus they become bilingual. (Fontaine et al. 2017) They

become a valuable resource for capacity building in many areas, including teaching, law, social services and governance.

In many communities, the language continues to be used in ceremonies and community members who have made a concerted and planned effort to sustain the language in this domain can lift up the whole community. Traditionally the use of apprenticeship learning was the way of inducting younger members into positions of leadership and responsibility. Employing this method for language teaching and learning the ceremonial responsibilities has been particularly effective because it is purposeful and provides ample opportunities for practice and guidance.

3.4 EDUCATION

While community-based programming is of crucial importance, so too is formal educational programming. There are several categories to consider. Per Article 14 of the UN Declaration, Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own education systems and provide education in their own languages.

1. Early Childhood Education and Preschool (0-5 years of age). Examples: infant care, language nests, preschool preparation, family and community programs, health and social programs.
2. Kindergarten to Grade 12 (5-18 years of age). Examples: core and immersion language programs.
3. Adult Education Programs - (Programs that instruct late language-learner, especially young parents) Examples: Mentor-Apprentice programs, online-learning, and other programs that can accommodate working adults.
4. Post-Secondary Institutions. (17+) Examples: Language programs, especially those partnered with First Nation communities, language instructor programs, Linguistics programs specializing in language revitalization, programs specializing in archiving Indigenous knowledge.
5. Community and Land-Based Language Learning Programs. (Any age) Examples: Language camps, language nests, cultural learning programs. These programs exist outside of mainstream academic traditions, though they can be partnered with and supported by said institutions, much like the Dechinta program at the University of British Columbia.

3.5 TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, ACCREDITATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

In many communities, fluent speakers are aging and in poor health. In order to provide language programming, there is a need for fluent speakers who have traditional cultural and language knowledge, literacy training and land-based knowledge.

Teacher education programs for Indigenous language teachers must include language fluency, Indigenous language literacy and knowledge drawn from the fields of education, linguistics, second language learning, early childhood education, adult education, community development and curriculum and resource development. They must be cross-disciplinary. There are training needs for

Indigenous language immersion teachers, not only the education programs mentioned above, but also the ability to design courses and develop curriculum in all subject areas in the Indigenous language. Teaching practices and behaviour management must be respectful and authentic to Indigenous values, beliefs, practices and epistemology.

Work must be initiated with credentialing bodies to modify their requirements to recognize and include the needs of Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous knowledge. Another task for credentialing bodies is to assess their procedures and requirements for possible barriers to placing fluent speakers in learning environments.

Finally, a long term strategy is needed by both schools and communities for succession planning for language teachers, language administrators, language planners, linguists and language mentors.

3.6 RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, STORAGE AND PROTECTION

Multiple types of resources are required to address the state of each language and the speaking stage of the learners. Communities need resources to support teachers that are at the appropriate age and speaking level; resources that are authentic to Indigenous worldviews, knowledge and values; resources that are both from the traditional world as well as from the perspective of the contemporary world.

Any technology developments for Indigenous languages must be in full partnership with Indigenous language communities and language experts. Any data stored using technology must be protected from loss due to obsolescence.

Each language must have access to a resource library, where resources can be safely stored from fire, water, and theft or misuse. Resources in the library must be accessible and monitored. Indigenous language resources in national and provincial institutions must be identified and made available to language communities. All documentation that has been collected by governments, universities, researchers, museums, archives must be made available to language communities.

All documentation, resources, and curriculum, must remain in the ownership of the language community. Using technology-based archiving and documenting of languages must be in the protection and control of the Indigenous community.

3.7 INFORMATION SHARING

Research conducted on Indigenous languages must be accessible, shared and it must contribute to the knowledge of the language in order to be part of the language work of the community. Researchers conducting studies on Indigenous languages must work in partnership with the language community and their work must benefit and contribute to the language work of the community. Mechanisms need to be created to document tried practices, both successful and unsuccessful, and these must be shared with language communities.

The work of Indigenous language revitalization is unique and Indigenous language experts are creative and inventive in new strategies. These need to be shared across the country so that language communities can benefit by learning from each other.

3.8 PROMOTION AND MOBILIZATION

The legislation should result in promotion of Indigenous languages at all levels and mobilization of resources to support them. At the community level, people want to see renewed pride and purposeful use of the languages – not just behind doors and at home, not just in schools. Our own people need to see the value in our languages and not see them as second or foreign languages. The multi-lingual splendour that our ancestors enjoyed and practiced needs to be rediscovered. Community leaders need to be champions of the language and elevate the status of languages by speaking them themselves. The message must be clear from all leadership that Indigenous languages are of value in all areas of life.

Within educational institutions, language teachers often do not have the same levels of respect afforded to other teachers, and the limited time and makeshift spaces often given to language teaching devalues the languages. We heard that people want to hear languages used everywhere, including at the government level. Government workers could be mandated to take Indigenous language and culture classes for awareness and Indigenous learning centres could be established. This could extend to provincial, territorial and municipal governments.

For the wider population, languages must be visible through translation of place names, public signs and use in media such as radio and television. New immigrants must be educated on the importance of Indigenous languages. In countries such as New Zealand, all have developed an increased respect for the Māori language due in large part to recognition and promotional efforts by the government. An environment needs to be fostered where all Canadians can be passionate for the Indigenous languages of this land. This is a big part of the normalization of our languages. The Government of Canada must demonstrate that the Indigenous languages of this land are valued and a part of our heritage.

3.9 URBAN AND OFF-RESERVE POPULATIONS

At every engagement session, participants asked: "How do we address the language needs of urban and off-reserve Indigenous people?" A significant percentage of Indigenous peoples reside away from their homelands. This is a very broad category which not only includes people living in towns and cities, but also children in foster care and children adopted outside of Indigenous communities, people living in justice or health institutions, and non-status, non-citizen or non-affiliated individuals. The Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action calls for "the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights." (2015) Articles 13 and 14 of the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples state that all Indigenous people have the right to speak

and be educated in their language. The legislation must provide resources and appropriate funding for language learning access for this population.

There needs to be exposure to Indigenous language and culture for Indigenous children who are in foster homes away from their communities. Language legislation should influence requirements for children in care and strengthen Indigenous families. Adults, too, need access and support to language learning wherever they live. There were many possible solutions put forward such as the development of technology to connect people with their languages, and creative funding solutions such as bursaries for individuals to return to their communities for immersion opportunities (similar to those offered for French and English) and the provision of other funding streams available to off-reserve individuals and communities. By far, provincial/territorial jurisdiction for education came across as the biggest concern. Many children attend provincial/territorial schools where no Indigenous languages are offered. If this legislation is to meet its goals, children must be able to access language education at any and all schools, including at the secondary level. This warrants strong collaboration with other levels of government.

4 SUMMARY

Despite the immense challenges ahead, people were also hopeful that together we can restore the languages which are the voice of the land and which house the unique knowledge system of the people who speak that language. If all involved in the development and implementation of this legislation follow the peoples' advice as outlined in this document, it would serve as a cornerstone to finally reconcile and resolve past injustices by the full engagement and participation of the Indigenous peoples of these lands. It means actively decolonizing our patterns of engagement. It means there must be a willingness to redesign structures to reflect the Indigenous ways of being. It is time to listen and learn from the inspirational and innovative initiatives underway in many Indigenous communities to keep their languages thriving and living. An Indigenous Languages Act will be a strong signal that the Indigenous languages of this land are of value and a significant, important and ongoing part of the Canada past and present.

APPENDICES

A. Revised Fishman's Scale

Stages	Speaker Community	Suggested interventions
8	Only elders	- Documentation - Mentor-apprentice - Connect elders to have conversations
7	Only adults past child bearing age	Establish language nest
6	Some intergeneration use	- Develop community sites of language use - Encourage parents to raise their children in the language
5	Language is still very much in use in the community	-Promote literacy - Promote volunteerism in language institutes (schools, offices, etc.)
4	Language is used in elementary school	- improve immersion teaching methodologies (TRP, Accelerated Second Language Learning, etc.) - immersion and bilingual programs - develop textbooks in the language in all academic subject matter
3	Language is used in places of business and by employees in less specialized work areas	- make the language the language of the office - develop new vocabulary for work terms
2	Language is used by local government and community, especially for communications and media	- promote language use in government - translate documents - language use in newsletters, newspapers, radio, TV
1	Some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education and training	- teach college level classes in the language - develop oral and written language in the arts and in publications - give awards for language publications and other language activities

Revised Fishman's Scale (based on Fishman 1991, Reyhner, 1999 and FPCC 2013)

B. List of Speakers from ILI Engagement Sessions

BRITISH COLUMBIA & YUKON REGIONAL SESSION, VANCOUVER BC,
JUNE 22-23, 2017

Chief Ron Ignace (Skeetchestn First Nation), Mary Jane Jim (Champagne and Aishihik First Nations) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

Dr. Trish Rosborough (University of Victoria), Dr. Peter Jacobs (Squamish Nation), Tina Jules (Tlingit, Dakhlaweidi Clan), Dr. Lorna Williams (Lil'wat First Nation) – The Recovery and Revitalization of Indigenous Languages: The State of Indigenous Languages as well as Theories and Practical Examples of Recovery and Revitalization

Dr. Marianne Ignace (Haida Nation), Dr. Kathy Michel (Adams Lake Indian Band), Jesse Fairley (Nee Tahi Buhn First Nation), Dr. Peter Jacobs (Squamish Nation) – Strategies and Methods to Achieve Indigenous Language Objectives

Roger Jones (Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation) - Legislation: Process & Principles **Note, Roger Jones presented this at every session except the National Roll Up**

Khelsilem, or Dustin Rivers (Squamish First Nation) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

PRE-AGA SESSION, REGINA SK,
JULY 24, 2017

Chief Ron Ignace (Skeetchestn First Nation) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

Joan Greyeyes (Muskeg Lake Cree Nation), Mike Mitchell (Mohawk, Akwesasne) - The State of Indigenous Languages: Perspectives from the Four Directions

QUEBEC REGIONAL SESSION, QUEBEC CITY QC,
SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2017

Mike Mitchell (Mohawk, Akwesasne) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

Ellen Gabriel (Kanien'kehá:ka Nation) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

Lucy Shem (Cree), Lisa Phillips (Kahnawà:ke), Monique Verreault (Pekuakamiulnuatsh Takuhikan) - The State of Indigenous Languages: Perspectives from the Four Directions

Roger Jones (Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation) - Indigenous Languages Legislation **Note, this was presented at every session except in Vancouver and at the National Roll Up**

Roger Jones (Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation) - Roles and Responsibilities **Note, this was presented at every session except in Vancouver and at the National Roll Up**

**ONTARIO REGIONAL SESSION, TORONTO ON,
SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2017**

Mike Mitchell (Mohawk, Akwesasne) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

Nelson Toulouse (Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation)) - Environmental scan presentation on Ontario First Nations Coordinated Approach and Activity.

Professor Fernand de Varennes (University of Moncton) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

Max Ireland (Oneida Nation of the Thames), Marsha Ireland (Oneida Nation of the Thames) – Oneida Sign Language

**PRAIRIES AND NWT REGIONAL SESSION, EDMONTON AB,
SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2017**

Chief Ron Ignace (Skeetchestn First Nation) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

Dr. Kevin Lewis (Cree) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

Wanda Wilson (Kahkewistahaw First Nation), Garry Anaquod (Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation), Shirley Fontaine (Ebb and Flow First Nation), Andy Norwegian (Liidlii Kue First Nation), Elizabeth Letendre (Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation) - The State of Indigenous Languages: Perspectives from the Four Directions

Dr. Onowa McIvor (Norway House Cree Nation) –Recovery & Revitalization of Indigenous Languages in Canada

Dr. Leroy Little Bear (Kainai Nation) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

**ATLANTIC REGIONAL SESSION, HALIFAX NS,
OCTOBER 11-12, 2017**

Blaire Gould (Mi'kmaw, Eskasoni First Nation) - The Historical Background of Languages Initiatives in the Past Leading up to the December 2016 Announcement of an Indigenous Languages Act

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Dr. Lorna Williams (Lil'wat First Nation) - The State of Indigenous Languages: The Recovery and Revitalization of Indigenous Languages

Professor Fernand de Varennes (University of Moncton) - Indigenous Language Recovery: The Promise of Second Language Speakers

Blaire Gould (Mi'kmaw, Eskasoni First Nation), Angela Christmas (Newfoundland), Victor Atwin (Maliseet), Marsha Vicaire (Listuguj), Andrea Bear Nicholas (Maliseet, Tobique First Nation) - The State of Indigenous Languages: Perspectives from the Four Directions

NATIONAL ROLL UP SESSION, GATINEAU QC, OCTOBER 18-19, 2017

Claudette Commanda (Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg) – Remarks from the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres

Mary Jane Norris (Algonquins of Pikwakanagon) - The State of Indigenous Languages in Canada: The Promise of Second Language Speakers & the Possibility of Indigenous Language Recovery

Dr. Onowa McIvor (Norway House Cree Nation), Dr. Peter Jacobs (Squamish Nation) – The Recovery, Revitalization & Maintenance of Indigenous Languages: The Essential Need for Multi-faceted Approaches for all Age Groups

Roger Jones (Sagamok Anishnawbek), Dr. Suzanne Gessner (University of Victoria) – Regional Engagement Sessions: What We Heard

Roger Jones (Sagamok Anishnawbek) – What Does This Mean for the Principles, Process and Content of the Proposed Indigenous Languages Legislation?

Miranda Huron (Mattawa North Bay Algonquins) – Looking Forward, Looking Back: Reflections Upon What We Learned from the Engagement Sessions Regarding Implementation Issues

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