

LLRC FULL CIRCLE 2020

Denegódhé asíe ghanítł'eth ha beghonít'a

mamāhtawimihtānihk ki-toskayāmināwahk

Empowering Our Youth



Belinda Daniels

I enjoy engaging on the topic of Language Reclamation. I believe that learning a 2nd Indigenous language will nourish the learning spirit and contributes to mental well-being and restores the inherent value of land education for everyone. I am an educator for the Saskatoon Public School Division, Ph.D. candidate at the U of S in the interdisciplinary Dept. and a sessional for the University of Alberta.

For the love of Indigenous languages, I am also the Founder and Coordinator of the *nehiyawak* Language Experience (well over a decade we have been in existence). This is a not-for-profit organization. We host weekly mini language workshops throughout the province monthly and every summer we host a large immersion language camp where participants come from all walks of life (and the world) to learn how to speak Cree. We also offer workshops and presentations on language methods and curriculum development.

Lastly, I do my best to be a part of my community by volunteering for causes like Station 20 West, United Way, Foundation of Endangered Languages and my own home community Sturgeon Lake First Nation.

Language Enrichment

There are multiple reasons why Indigenous languages should be learned including the relationships between language, land and Indigenous traditional knowledge. Where Indigenous communities and Indigenous languages thrive, they maintain current traditional knowledge systems and regenerate new knowledge. When Indigenous languages are used and spoken, land and its diverse ecologies are honoured and appreciated, resulting in a healthy environmental space and place. Indigenous communities are fully aware of their relationship to the land and in this way, they lead their communities back to reclamation of land-based pedagogy. Indigenous language revitalization helps peoples reconnect with traditional knowledge. This is best done with teaching on and with the land. Learners of the language and the maintenance of the language help develop a relationship to the land, animals, plants and other natural occurrences. “We urgently need such place based knowledge to help guide both species-recovery and habitat-restoration efforts. These efforts may also be essential in supporting the persistence of resources on which livelihoods for Indigenous fisherman, foragers, or hunters are based” (Wilder et al., 2016). Indigenous knowledge with language are a source of antidotes that can help with slowing of climate change and lead to some answers but ensuring that Indigenous peoples to lead in this process.

Land, Language, Relationships and Culture