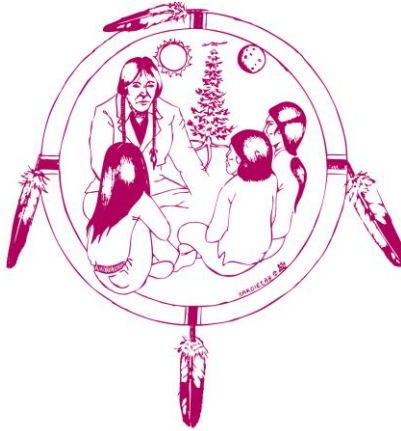


# *Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education*



## **POLICY 21 HUMAN RESOURCES Ahkwesáhsró:non Culture and Kanien'keha Language in the Workplace**

### **Please Note:**

AMBE policies are governance documents that state the Board's decision related to an area of operation by stating purpose, guiding principles, basic procedures, and key responsibilities.

AMBE senior management is accountable for implementing Board policies, and expected to exercise good judgment when implementing the policies in the context of day-to-day operations. Where appropriate, senior management may decide to develop specific guidelines and procedures, Administrative Frameworks, to ensure the appropriate implementation of Board policy.

This policy was adopted for the first time by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) on:  
May 21, 2020

Subsequent amendments:  
\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of *Policy 21: Ahkwesáhsró:non Culture and Kanien'keha Language in the Workplace*, is to ensure the continued preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Akwesasne Mohawk Community traditions. Preserving and revitalizing our culture and language plays a critical role in ensuring that our staff continue to understand the importance of our unique identity, celebrate our heritage, and promote our values and ways of being with each other, as well as within the global community.

## 2. Definitions

In order of appearance

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2.1 Culture	Culture is a way of being that defines and distinguishes a people or nation, as expressed through their customs, language, art ( <i>stories, music, dance, visual arts, crafts</i> ), cuisine, social institutions, achievements, and interaction with other peoples and nations. Culture is composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Non-material aspects</i>, including values, beliefs, customs, traditions and language, which influences our social norms, rules, and laws that govern our society.</li></ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Material aspects</i> are composed of items that we make and use as an expression of our identity, which includes a wide variety of things, from buildings, clothing, stories, music, dance, visual arts, crafts and many others.</li> </ul>
2.2	Preservation	The activity or process of keeping Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language alive among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
2.3	Revitalization	To give focused attention and importance to Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
2.4	Promotion	The act of developing and integrating Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language into the workplace and community activities.
2.5	Protection	The act of saving Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language among staff and by extension within their families and the larger community.
2.6	Safe and Respectful Workplace	A safe and respectful workplace is a place of employment where staff are valued, respected, treated fairly, have clear expectations, and work harmoniously. Staff are encouraged to celebrate and learn from each other's knowledges, ethics, values, principles, arts, laws, norms, customs and value systems.
2.7	The Board	Refers to the <i>Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education</i> , which includes both the governance and administrative structure.
2.8	Board Members	Includes both Trustees ( <i>Elected Members</i> ) and Ex-officio Members ( <i>Portfolio Chiefs and the Director of Education</i> ).
2.9	Cultural Diversity	The existence of different cultures and in turn different knowledges, beliefs, arts, laws, norms, customs and value systems within society.
2.10	Knowledge Keepers and Elders	It is recognized that among the Mohawks of Akwesasne there are individuals like Eminent Leaders and Elders, language and culture experts, Clan Mothers, Faith Keepers, etc., who possess unique and specific knowledge of <i>Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language</i> , whose knowledge should be preserved, revitalized, promoted and protected.

### 3. Principles and General Guidelines

#### 3.1. Preserve, Revitalize, Promote, and Protect

- 3.1.1. Staff will actively seek to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language.
- 3.1.2. Staff will be guided by the Hotinonshon:ni principle of seven generations. This principle will ensure that staff consider the effect of decisions today regarding Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language will have on descendants seven generations into the future.
- 3.1.3. Staff will ensure our Kanien'keha birthright is transmitted through our educational system and is consistent with Hotinonshon:ni teachings.
- 3.1.4. Staff will promote our identity through our collective strengths, challenges, opportunities and lived experiences of our students and staff when participating in local, provincial and federal indigenous programs, initiatives and committees.

#### 3.2. Safe and Respectful Workspace

- 3.2.1. Consistent with Ahkwesáhsró:non culture, everyone at AMBE (Board Members, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members) will support and participate in creating an inclusive and safe working space where all cultures are respected and valued.

## **4. Process and Procedures**

### **4.1. Preservation**

- 4.1.1. The workplace will be a welcoming space to express material aspects of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture including language, dress, music and food.
- 4.1.2. Staff will feel empowered to use Kanien'keha language at work. The use of Kanien'keha language will be promoted, welcomed and encouraged at work.

### **4.2. Revitalization**

- 4.2.1. Staff will be encouraged to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, as well as, the Hotinonshon:ni principle of seven generations.
- 4.2.2. Staff will incorporate Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at school, centre and community events.

### **4.3. Promotion**

- 4.3.1. Staff will be provided with opportunities to learn about material and non-material aspects of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture in order to form a stronger identity and a greater sense of self.
- 4.3.2. The use of Ahkwesáhsró:non symbols and Kanien'keha language will be incorporated into the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education's communication strategy and policy as appropriate.

### **4.4. Protection**

- 4.4.1. In order to create and model a space which is respectful and inclusive for all staff members, Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language will be valued in conjunction with the diverse cultures represented by our staff, students and parents.
- 4.4.2. Protection of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language requires staff to model and create spaces for dialogue, understanding and empathy with individuals from other cultures leading to increased opportunity for safe and inclusive spaces at work.

### **4.5. Safe and Respectful Workspace**

- 4.5.1. Everyone at AMBE (Board Members, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members) will be expected to act in a way that is consistent with Ahkwesáhsró:non culture, and support and participate in creating an inclusive and safe working space where all cultures are respected and valued.
- 4.5.2. When an individual is acting in an undesirable manner that is inconsistent with Ahkwesáhsró:non culture, they will be reminded that everyone at AMBE is expected to support and participate in creating an inclusive and safe working space where all cultures are respected and valued.
- 4.5.3. If the behavior persists, their behavior will be referred to the Principal, Senior Manager and/or Director of Education for appropriate action.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1. Board Members will:**

- 5.1.1. Ensure that the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education makes every effort to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language through the provision of appropriate resources and training;
- 5.1.2. Be encouraged to participate in Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language opportunities offered by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education;
- 5.1.3. Seek the advice, wisdom and experience of Knowledge Keepers and Elders in the preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work as required;
- 5.1.4. Model behavior expected of AMBE staff by participating in school, centre and community events highlighting the importance of preserving, revitalizing, promoting and protecting Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, actively encouraging colleagues, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members to support and participate in all events;
- 5.1.5. Actively promote respect and value all cultures leading to the creation of inclusive and safe workspaces, ensuring that concerns are properly addressed by Management;
- 5.1.6. Actively integrate Kanien'keha language and Ahkwesáhsró:non culture at each Board of Trustee meeting, and during community or external events; and
- 5.1.7. We are committed to providing reasonable levels of human, financial, and material resources necessary for the implementation of this policy.

### **5.2. The Director of Education will:**

- 5.2.1. Be encouraged to participate in Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language opportunities offered by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education;
- 5.2.2. Support the Board of Trustees in its efforts to ensure that the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education makes every effort to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work;
- 5.2.3. Lead the effort to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and the Kanien'keha language by providing AMBE Board Members, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members with opportunities to learn and use Kanien'keha language and to experience Ahkwesáhsró:non culture;
- 5.2.4. Seek the advice, wisdom and experience of Knowledge Keepers and Elders in the preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work as required;
- 5.2.5. Ensure that Kanien'keha language is prominent in all signage and communication materials;
- 5.2.6. Model the behavior expected by AMBE Board Members and staff by participating in school, centre and community events highlighting the importance of preserving, revitalizing, promoting and protecting Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, actively encouraging Board Members, colleagues, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members to support and participate in all events; and
- 5.2.7. Actively promote respect and value for all cultures leading to the creation of inclusive and safe workspaces, addressing any concerns brought to her/his attention.

### **5.3. Senior Management and Principals will:**

- 5.3.1. Be encouraged to participate in Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language opportunities offered by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education;
- 5.3.2. Support Staff in their efforts to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work;
- 5.3.3. In conjunction with the Director of Education, lead the efforts of their services, schools or centre to preserve, revitalize, promote, and protect Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and the Kanien'keha language by providing staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members with opportunities to learn and use Kanien'keha language and to experience Ahkwesáhsró:non culture;
- 5.3.4. Seek the advice, wisdom, and experience of Knowledge Keepers and Elders in the preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work as required;
- 5.3.5. Model behavior expected of AMBE staff by participating in school, centre and community events highlighting the importance of preserving, revitalizing, promoting and protecting Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, actively encouraging colleagues, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members to support and participate in all events; and
- 5.3.6. Actively promote respect and value for all cultures leading to the creation of inclusive and safe workspaces, addressing any concerns brought to her/his attention.

#### **5.4. Staff will:**

- 5.4.1. Be encouraged to participate in Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language opportunities offered by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education;
- 5.4.2. Model the importance and value of preserving, revitalizing, promoting and protecting Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at the workplace;
- 5.4.3. Ensure that *all* students participate in all Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language classes offered by the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education;
- 5.4.4. Welcome the advice, wisdom, and experience of Knowledge Keepers and Elders in the preservation, revitalization, promotion and protection of Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language at work;
- 5.4.5. Participate in school, centre and community events that highlight the importance of preserving, revitalizing, promoting and protecting Ahkwesáhsró:non culture and Kanien'keha language, actively encouraging colleagues, students, parents/guardians, and community members to support and participate in all events; and
- 5.4.6. Support and participate in creating inclusive and safe workspaces where all cultures are respected and valued.

## **6. Policy Review and Revision**

### **6.1. Principles and Directives:**

- 6.1.1. It is important for the policies of the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education to remain current and serve the best interest of Akwesasne students and the Akwesasne community.
- 6.1.2. The Board of Trustees recognizes that this policy should be reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years and/or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.

## **6.2. Procedures:**

- 6.2.1. The Board of Trustees will establish a timeline for the regular review of this policy that requires the policy be reviewed at the minimum 5 years from the date of approval by the Board or as required by new circumstance or obligations.

## **6.3. Roles and Responsibilities:**

- 6.3.1. Board of Trustees will:

- Establish a timeline for the regular review of this policy and ensure that it is respected; and
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed at a minimum every 5 years from the date of approval, or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.

- 6.3.2. The Director of Education will:

- Initiate a review of this policy at a minimum every 5 years from the date of approval, or when the legal or regulatory requirements of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne change or the Board must meet new government obligations.