

Decolonization Learning Journey

A four-part Learning Journey with Mi'kmaw Elders and knowledge sharers.

Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia

Decolonization Learning Journey – Resource document

Series 3 - Webinar #7, November 17, 2020

Hosting team:

- Elder Jane Meader, Elder, BACS & Med
- Mary Beth Doucette, Assistant Professor and Purdy Crawford Chair in CBU's Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University
- Nicole Cammaert, Associate Executive Director, CSCNS

Guest speaker:

Rebecca Scirocco & Elizabeth Cremo

Topic:

Culturally Relevant Education

Highlights:

- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) is the official name for the Mi'kmaq Education Authority, officially created in 1997. The Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey represents the educational interests of 12 Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia. The *Mi'kmaq Education Act*, a self-governing agreement, recognizes the role of the education authority to support local band schools in delivering language immersion and other culturally rich programs and activities. However, unlike a school board, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey serves rather than directs the activities of its members' local schools. ^{1 2}
- MK is credited with raising the graduation rate for Indigenous students from 30% to 90% in just over twenty years. ^{3 4}
- Eskasoni is celebrating its 36th year since taking local control over its education system in 1980. The Eskasoni School Board strives to offer the best education to community children. Under the

¹ Learn more about Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey: <https://kinu.ca/>

² Watch Eleanor Bernard discuss the jurisdiction and development of MK:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvaA_PthxQA

³ Read more: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/mi-kmaq-education-authority-nova-scotia-1.5056481>

⁴ Read more: <https://www.macleans.ca/education/mikmaq-st-francis-xavier-university/>

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jurisdiction of the school board is the Ksite'taqnk Daycare, Eskasoni Elementary and Middle School, Eskasoni Immersion School, Chief Allison M. Bernard Memorial High School and Unama'ki TEC adult education programs and retention programs. ⁵

- The Eskasoni school board has sustained a Mi'kmaw language core program, and an immersion program which eventually expanded to a stand-alone Mi'kmaw immersion school. The main reason for this was so the students attending immersion classes would hear Mi'kmaw at all times in school. It would be used for school announcements, on the playground, in the hallways and encouraged by all teachers in student communication with each other and staff. ⁶

⁵ See some school programming in action: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdQt0ocMRNo>

⁶ Watch a CBC News piece about the Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Immersion School:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhaDmBkhuy>