



## VISION

*To have Anishinaabemwin as the common spoken language of Deshkan Zibiing*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To develop, promote, and encourage language initiatives so that our community, our children and our children's - children will hear, learn and enjoy speaking our original language and honor our ancestors.*

## CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES LANGUAGE DECLARATION

### PREAMBLE

The Deshkan Zibiing Anishinaabemowin Declaration affirms our belief in fundamental human rights and in the dignity of the Anishinaabeg. Whereas, the language of a distinct people is the key determinant for declaring sovereignty, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation recognizes the knowledge, worldview and ways of relating with all of creation are embedded in Anishinaabe language, thus the Anishinaabe language is a gift to be protected for future generations. Chippewa of the Thames is committed to ensure that our Anishinaabe language is paramount to nation building of the Chippewas of the Thames community.

Chippewa of the Thames First Nation acknowledges the impact that the residential school systems inflicted upon our people through assimilation and colonization of First Nations people across turtle Island, by way of devaluing the children's first language. Anishinaabemwin. Recognizing the impact of these systems on our spirituality and first language that it being in our blood memory will be restored. Chippewa's of the Thames also acknowledges the positive impact individuals, families, clans, and nation leadership, in this post residential school era. Can have on changing how our children value their language. Through determination of individual members, families and nation government. We believe that one word, one phrase at a time in our language will help re-unite our families, build strong community relationships and will reestablish our strong connection to land and provide a means of restoring our cultural values centered on the seven grandfather teachings.

### **Love, Humility, Respect, Bravery, Kindness, Truth, & Wisdom**

Our vision of the Deshkan Zibiing community is where our people will once again speak and think in our language - Anishinaabemwin, now and on in the future as a fundamental basis of our spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, social and working lives.

### PRINCIPLES

Therefore, we the people of Deshkan Zibiing Territory are committed to build a community that maintains and speaks its Anishinaabe language and to develop, promote, and encourage language initiatives so that our community, our children and our children's children will hear, learn and enjoy speaking our original language and honor our ancestors and the wisdom rooted in the Anishinaabemwin. We accept this responsibility by embracing the following principles:

1. We recognize that each Anishinaabe born into this world is gifted with Anishinaabemwin, and therefore the right to speak Anishinaabemwin is inherent with being Anishinaabe.
2. We are committed to making our community's Anishinaabe language a priority and affirm our unwavering determination and dedication to its use within the Chippewas of the Thames community.
3. We recognize Anishinaabe language revitalization is a common and shared responsibility that requires an integrated and balanced approach; and place emphasis on strengthening community cooperation across all sectors of our society and including all programs within and associated with Chippewa of the Thames.
4. We acknowledge and fully support the role of elders and fluent language speakers whose dialects and languages maybe different from south western dialect.
5. We recognize the importance of having an understanding and appreciation of other languages and dialects so we may better understand our own dialect.
6. We will commit to build and maintain an ongoing resource of Anishinaabemwin that is of Southwestern dialect.
7. We welcome the efforts of the wide range of people that are assisting to revitalize Anishnaabemwin and increase its use within the Chippewa's of the Thames community.
8. We will promote, nurture, and facilitate Anishinaabe language programs, policies and initiatives within the Chippewa of the Thames and other Anishinaabe Nation communities that benefit all our members by providing the necessary resources to develop, participate in and build partnerships, working relationships and alliances to preserve, enhance Anishinaabe language learning opportunities.
9. We actively support the use of Anishnaabemwin by all Chippewa of the Thames employees, agencies and services within and around the community by establishing and maintaining learning centers that prepare learners linguistically and culturally for true Anishinaabe expression.
10. We fully support all employees, elected officials and committees acquiring the necessary language training to learn and use Anishnaabemwin in the workplace.
11. We are committed to foster positive attitudes towards Anishnaabemwin and promote Anishnaabemwin use within the Chippewa of the Thames community and with the community members who may reside off reserve as a fundamental and critical component in maintaining and restoring our values and culture.
12. We recognize that we are Ojibway Anishinaabe/ "keepers of the faith" and that the term "Chippewa" is a non-Anishinaabe derivative of the word Ojibway; and that we are part of the Confederacy of the Threes Fires Algonquian language family.
13. We reaffirm the need and urgency for taking a comprehensive and holistic approach to revitalizing Anishinaabemwin that work towards achievable, measurable, and timely targets; where progress is evaluated to ensure we are achieving results.
14. We are resolved in our commitments that practical action and the resources needed are put in place to ensure real and measurable results.
15. We recognize the importance of reading and writing skills in these in modern day society where technology can be an important vehicle for language revitalization.
16. We acknowledge the needs of all our language learners. Where learning by hearing the language spoken fluently is not available to members, we will support and provide resources to support their learning:
17. We will not discriminate against fluent speakers who do not have teaching credentials and will develop a list of credible speakers. Until we establish a foundation of language dependency, our standards of teaching the language will change how we teach our children.
18. Thus we will use the Feiro writing system consistently throughout the community to create a consistent and continual familiarity of language and structure.
19. Finally, Anishinaabemwin immersion and fluency will be our long-term goal where Anishinaabemwin is our primary language.