

Tsi kiońhnhet Onkwawen'na Kanien'ké:ha

Let us Restore our Words in Mohawk

An MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan



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INTRODUCTION

During January 2016 the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne recognized the need to develop a Strategic Plan to guide the Council and the MCA organization on the philosophy, vision, values and strategic goals that are required and need to be accomplished. A strategic plan was collaboratively developed with the Grand Chief, District Chiefs and Senior staff and was approved by Council in March 2016.

One of the key objectives highlighted in the MCA Strategic plan was the revitalization, preservation, promotion and protection of Mohawk language in the community. This document is the result of extensive dialogues intended to result in a comprehensive Mohawk language strategic plan. The strategic plan considers all aspects of Mohawk Council of Akwesasne operations as it pertains to the revitalization, preservation, promotion and protective of Mohawk language. The plan includes a vision and mission, as well as defined goals, objectives and priorities that are realistic, achievable and measureable. The Mohawk Language strategic plan is intended to recognize the uniqueness of Akwesasne and coordinate language training efforts in a collaborative and cohesive manner with key providers such as the Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE), Akwesasne Economic Development Agency (AEDA), Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS), Iohahi:io and the Native North American Traveling College (NNATC).

The consultant worked with key stakeholders, MCA senior staff and Council District Chiefs to create the framework of a Mohawk language strategic plan which incorporated long-range components (a vision, mission, values), medium term aspects (objectives and priorities) and short term components (action plans). Performance measures were also identified as a feature of the plan to enable progress to be regularly reviewed.

A variety of models and approaches were researched as part of an environmental scan in order to inform the development of the strategic plan as it relates to Mohawk language revitalization, preservation, promotion and protection.

The extent of community/employee consultation into the Mohawk language strategic planning process consisted of a survey that was conducted during December 2016 via social media (the MCA Facebook Page and website) and Survey Monkey. The MCA Help Desk distributed the link to the survey to all MCA employees (approximately 800). One-hundred and sixty-eight responses were received over a two week period. The data collected was utilized to form the context for this plan.

Key stakeholder engagement was undertaken during October – December 2016. The process involved meetings on October 7, November 4, November 18 and December 16, 2016. Detailed minutes were taken to document the dialogue and process.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

It was determined by the MCA that key stakeholders were essential to the development of this strategic plan. The intent was to coordinate and collaborate between partners to be as inclusive as possible and to utilize limited resources as best as possible for Mohawk language protection, promotion, preservation and revitalization. They were as follows:

Chief Ryan Jacobs, MCA Youth/Elders/Culture Language Committee
Chief Louise Thompson, MCA Youth/Elders/Culture Language Committee
Chief Joe Lazore, MCA Youth/Elders/Culture Language Committee
Chief Vince Thompson, MCA Youth/Elders/Culture Language Committee
Chief Connie Lazore, MCA Youth/Elders/Culture Language Committee
Billy Sunday, Elder
Elvera Sargent, Akwesasne Freedom School
Tara Skidders, Akwesasne Freedom School
Dorothy Lazore, Akwesasne Cultural Restoration
Margaret Lafrance, Iohahi:io
Donna Lahache, AMBE
Karen Mitchell, AEDA
Mary McDonald, AEDA
Penny Peters, MCA CCP
Peter Garrow, Director, MCA Nation Building
Patricia Francis, MCA Nation Building
Donna Roundpoint, MCA, Assistant Executive Director
Sarah Konwahahawi Rourke, NNATC
Bernice Lazore, NNATC
Dr. Rose-Alma J. McDonald, Consultant

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Mohawk language strategic planning model encompassed envisioning the opportunity through a review of the historical background of Mohawk language in the community, establishing core values, a vision and mission for long term Mohawk language promotion, protection, revitalization and preservation.

The second component of the model was evaluating the language environment through a SWOT analysis, data gathering, resource analysis and identification of key success indicators.

The third component of the model was creating and designing an implementation plan consisting of goals, strategies, action plans, training requirements and a communication strategy.

The fourth component of the model was designing the measuring and reporting strategy for the plan which consisted of identifying performance measures, evaluation methodologies, reporting requirements and mechanisms for incorporating adjustments to the plan as required.

Strategic planning is important because it is about taking actions to achieve identified goals over a time period. This is a five year plan.

Strategic planning is a process that helps an organization to proceed towards its goals. The key elements of a strategic plan are:

1. **Vision** – which defines what we want to be in the future.
2. **Guiding Principles** – are those values and ideals that are important and guide the work that we do.
3. **Mandate** – describes the purpose of our organization and why it exists.
4. **Goals** – are stepping stones to achieving our overall vision and represent what we want to achieve in the next 5 years.
5. **Priorities** – are those activities that are associated with our goals and objectives that require immediate action.
6. **Key strategies** – determine where our focus needs to be.
7. **Objectives** – are stepping stones to our goals and represent what we want to achieve in short term increments.
8. **Action plans** – assign responsibility and resources to achieve what, when, where and how.
9. **Evaluation** – an evaluation determines progress towards achieving goals annually and identifies adjustments that may be required to keep on track.

KANIEN'KÉHA LANGUAGE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic plan are:

1. *Family and home are the centre of our community. It is essential for our language to be reinforced in the home. Pride in speaking our language is essential.*
2. *Community support for our language in all phases of community life is critical to the well-being of all Akwesasronon and for the preservation of our culture and lifeways.*
3. *Use of our language in everyday activities is important. All Akwesasronon have a role to play in keeping our language alive.*
4. *Our history and traditions are important to our identity. They are incorporated in our language which must be preserved, promoted, protected and revitalized.*
5. *Mohawk language is essential to nation building which is critical to building strong governance and understanding in a modern world.*
6. *Our Elders are the repositories of our language and culture. They are the source of our history, knowledge and traditional world view.*
7. *Reconciliation through restoration of our language fosters a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values, about Mohawk language, culture and history.*
8. *Rebirth, healing (condolence) and empowerment will be restored through the revitalization, preservation, promotion and protection of our language.*
9. *Let us restore our words in Mohawk: Tsi kiohnhet Onkwawen:na Kanien'ké:ha*

VISION

A vision statement is a description of what an organization strives to be. It states what the values and beliefs are in relation to how the organization works to achieve its goals and objectives.

The vision for the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan is :

“To revive our Kanien’kéha language as a living language within the hearts and minds of our children and families.”

*Tentitewa’keráhkwe ne onkwaweh’na aonsonto:nhnhéte’ onkweriáhsakon tá:non’
onkwanontsistakó’nhshon ne onkonkwe’tahshó n:a*

Our vision captures the spirit of our desire to revive our language as a living language linking the future (our children) with the inherent respect for our traditional knowledge and values within the hearts and minds of all Akwesasronon.

MANDATE

The mandate for an organization describes the purpose of the organization. The mandate of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is:

Sustaining our inherent rights, facing challenges together to build a strong and healthy future.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The following illustrates the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats pertaining to Mohawk language preservation, protection, promotion and revitalization in Akwesasne. A SWOT analysis determines what assists an organization in accomplishing its objectives, and what obstacles must be overcome or minimized to achieve desired results. When using SWOT analysis, an organization needs to be realistic about assessing its strengths and weaknesses. Analysis needs to examine where the organization is today, and where it may be positioned in the future.¹ The following is a summary of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategy SWOT analysis.

STRENGTHS (helpful characteristics and advantages internal to the organization)

- Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS), Ahkwasáshsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) immersion program, Akwesasne Economic Development Agency (AEDA) CAN8 program, Iohahi:io Education and Training Centre, Native North American Traveling College (NNATC),
- We are good at planning,
- We have people with traditional knowledge,
- We are a leader among other First Nations,
- We are protectors of our language,
- It is timely – there can be reconciliation through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC),
- Language is our right through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and Section 35 of the Constitution,
- We have technology and the ability for sharing resources,
- Our language and culture is no longer hidden.

CHALLENGES/WEAKNESSES (challenges to overcome)

- Lack of funding for capacity building,
- Loss of fluent speakers,
- Lack of facilities,
- Impact of residential schools causing language loss,
- Indian Act and legislation, white culture and colonization,
- Keeping the language alive is a challenge,
- Lack of Mohawk language teachers and loss of teachers who are retiring. There is a need for replacements,
- Certification of our instructors is a challenge,
- Lack of community support for our language .

OPPORTUNITIES (opportunities that can be taken advantage of external to the organization)

- Working together and collaborating on language revitalization,
- Establishing our own language accreditation methodologies,
- Establishing our own Mohawk language authority/commission,
- Putting together a marketing strategy to promote Mohawk language,
- Communication through radio, newspapers, TV and social media in Mohawk,
- Mohawk signage throughout the community to increase language visibility,
- Use of the Science and math project curriculum as a language resource,
- Teaching methods through immersion with a focus on children in order to grow speakers

THREATS (threats to the organization externally)

- Limited government funding for language preservation and revitalization,
- There is an all English environment around us,
- There is a language disconnect between home and school for our children and families,
- Our language needs to be reinforced in every aspect of daily life,
- Technology, texting, Facebook, TV and social media are not in Mohawk,
- Mohawk language investment is not equal to French by government,
- Indian Act and legislation has created the loss of our language,
- There is a lack of Mohawk language speakers. The language is in crisis.
- We need to grow more Mohawk language speakers so that we do not lose our language.

MOHAWK LANGUAGE CRISIS

Iroquoian languages were originally spoken over a very large expanse of territory, including much of the southern Canada (Ontario and Quebec) particularly along the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. ⁱⁱ **All of the Iroquoian languages today are endangered**, to one degree or another. The following table illustrates a best guestimate of the number of speakers and where they are located.

LANGUAGE	WHERE THE LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN	GUESTIMATE # OF SPEAKERS ⁱⁱⁱ
Cayuga	Central and Western NY State, southern Ontario, northwestern Oklahoma	70
Mohawk	Northern NY, Ontario and Quebec	2,000
Oneida	Central NY, southern Ontario and eastern Wisconsin	250
Onondaga	Central NY	50
Seneca	Western NY, southern Ontario, northeastern Oklahoma	100
Tuscarora	North Carolina, Western NY, southern Ontario	3

Comparative data from 2011 National Household Survey Statistics Canada enumerated 2,420 Iroquoian Haudenosuane language speakers including 1,485 Mohawk speakers, 720 Cayuga speakers and 235 Oneida Speakers. Almost all of the speakers were located in Ontario, with just over 100 living in Quebec.^{iv} It must be noted that there are no accurate estimates of true numbers of Iroquoian language speakers. These are guestimates only.

The following table indicates guestimates for the Mohawk Nations in Ontario, Quebec and the USA pertaining to the numbers of Mohawk language speakers. Population data is based on Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada data.

COMMUNITY	Population	Guestimate # of Speakers
Akwesasne	12,000	750
Six Nations of the Grand River	22,086	20
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	7,420	50
Mohawks of Kanasatake, QC	2,000	40
Mohawks of Kahnawake, QC	9,275	200
Wahata Mohawk	633	10
Ganien:ke, NY	800	10
Totals	54,214	1,080

All of our languages are severely endangered and in the case of the Tuscarora language, it is nearly extinct. The definition of *severely endangered* indicates “speakers very rarely or never learned an indigenous language as a mother tongue, especially children.” The language is usually spoken as a mother tongue by the grandparent generation and up. “Language usage is only sometimes between elderly speakers and rarely or never used for natural daily communication.” Language resources are limited to some recordings and written records of variable quality.

The MCA Mohawk Language Community Survey conducted during December 2016 results and findings are indicative of the need for Mohawk language protection, promotion, preservation and revitalization as follows:

- Out of 168 survey respondents 68% reported they were not a Mohawk language speaker with 33% reporting they were a speaker. Eighty-three percent of respondents further reported that Mohawk was not their first language as compared to 17% who stated Mohawk was their first language. Only 8% of respondents reported they were fluent in Mohawk.
- When asked if they could speak Mohawk (even a few words), how did they learn the language, 60% reported from their parents, 43% their grandparents and 36% from their Elders.
- When asked what the main language spoken in their home was, 93% reported English. Only 5% reported Mohawk as the main language spoken at home.
- When asked if they speak Mohawk, whether they speak the language to their children, 40% said yes, and 12% said no. Forty-eight percent reported the question was not applicable (since they did not speak Mohawk).
- When asked how they view the state of Mohawk language in our community today, 43% reported the *language is declining* (with adult speakers and some young speakers who know the language but use English instead), 30% reported the *language is endangered* (where Elders use the Mohawk language but parents use English in rearing children), and 16% reported the *language as enduring* (with a percentage of speakers of all ages who have switched to the Mohawk language in all parts of the community, work and home).
- When asked if in their opinion, whether the community of Akwesasne values our Mohawk language, 67% reported yes and 21% reported no. Twelve-percent reported they didn't know.

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- When asked historically, what were the factors that contributed to language loss in our community, 88% reported *Indian Residential Schools*, 74% reported *provincial government school systems*, 71% reported *Christianity*, 57% reported *decision by grandparents* and 48% reported the *Indian Act*.
 - When asked what are the factors that contribute to Mohawk language loss in our community today, 88% reported that *Mohawk language is not spoken in the home*, 76% reported *loss of Elders and knowledge keepers*, 65% reported *assimilation*, 62% *decision by parents/caregivers*, 62% *loss of cultural values*, 50% *not enough speakers to make an influence* and 45% *lack of federal government support and funding*.
 - When asked what they would like to see done to revive Mohawk language in our community, 79% reported parent language training to reinforce student learning, 73% Mohawk language training in the workplace, 72% community resources such as a Mohawk language library or resource centre, 68% Mohawk language immersion programs, 67% cultural activities that focus on Mohawk language, 63% teacher training: certification and accreditation in Mohawk language, curriculum development and standardization, 58% research and development: books and technology in Mohawk language and 52% a Mohawk language law and language commission.
 - When asked if they would be interested in attending Mohawk language classes provided by the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne 86% said yes.

This strategy is designed to address the issues identified in the MCA Mohawk Language Community Survey, as well as input from key stakeholders.

LANGUAGE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The following is a framework of language planning elements by family, community, education, training and government/funding for strengthening Mohawk language over the next decade. It is a broad set of strategies and actions to support increased use of Mohawk language by all Akwesasronon so that *we may restore our words in Mohawk*.

FAMILY AND HOME	COMMUNITY	EDUCATION AND TRAINING	GOVERNMENT AND FUNDING
Parent language training to reinforce student learning	Community events, activities focused on language	Teacher training, certification, and accreditation	Funding equal to French Lobbying for funding by MCA
Language training in the work place	Mohawk language Law and Language Commission	Curriculum development and standardization	Policy making to support Mohawk language
Cultural activities focusing on language e.g. hunting, fishing	Community signage in Mohawk and mapping	Immersion programs	Reconciliation
Games, cartoons in Mohawk	Community Resources: Archive, Library	Research and development: books, technology	Special projects

This plan is based on the assumption that responsibility for language should be shared between individuals, families, districts, language communities and government.

There are insufficient resources, including staff and funding, to support the preservation, use and revitalization of our language. The purpose of this plan is to support the commitment and ownership of our language and demonstrate and publicize the benefits of undertaking Mohawk language protection, promotion, preservation and revitalization.

Strong coordinated efforts between all stakeholders and dedicated funding is required to support these efforts.

GOALS

Goals are the stepping stones to achieving the overall vision for the next five years. The overall goals of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan is:

1. To create and increase the number of fluent speakers.
2. To create and increase fluent Kanien'kéha language teachers.
3. To create Mohawk language learning resources.
4. To encompass the whole community with Kanien'kéha Language through collaborations and sharing of effort.
5. To use our history as part of language programming.
6. To empower Kanien'kéha language speakers.
7. To utilize our elders as repositories of the language and culture.
8. To make Kanien'kéha language prominent throughout the community of Akwesasne.

KEY STRATEGIES

Key strategies are where the focus needs to be to ensure the goals are achieved and consistent with the strategic plan mandate. The following are the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic priorities:

Building capacity – training teachers and speakers through partnerships with key stakeholders and other organizations with similar mandates. Utilizing retired teachers as repositories and trainers of the Kanien'kéha language.

Lobbying and fundraising – core funding negotiations to cover administration, salaries, language planning, training and implementation.

Curriculum and resource development - including a centralized library and resource centre – development of curriculum using appropriate technology, computers and digital technology to organize and store language research materials for the purpose of promotion, protection, preservation and revitalization of Mohawk language.

A Kanien'kéha Language Commission - encompassing commitment by the community to Kanien'kéha language through engagement activities to ensure language preservation and language choice as a right including a Kanien'kéha Language Law.

Marketing planning - to create Kanien'kéha language awareness and signage to promote high visibility of Kanien'kéha language and use of the Kanien'kéha language (every day, everywhere).

Language Health Needs Assessment - to quantify the health of our language (by a needs assessment).

Milestones

A milestone is an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development. The milestones for achievement of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan are:

1. To encourage people to speak the Kanien'kéha language through increased numbers of language classes.
2. Increase the opportunities for Kanien'kéha language learning.
3. Foster language awareness through Kanien'kéha media, TV, radio and print.
4. Increase the number of Kanien'kéha speakers and teachers.
5. Foster a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about Kanien'kéha language culture and history.
6. Increase the use of trained teachers especially teaching skills for new teachers.
7. Monitoring language learning through language assessments e.g. beginner, intermediate and advanced.
8. Leave no one behind in language learning.
9. Increased collaborations with language stakeholders.
10. Increase in the number of degrees and certification of language programs.
11. Foster empowerment and success in language learning.
12. Nurture an environment of language learning in and out of the classroom.

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13. More immersion programs.
 14. More pro-language programs like Quebec/French.
 15. Increase the amount of resources and promotion of Mohawk language
 16. Repatriation of our language.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders and formal partnerships help to assist in the achievement of our goals and promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in our work, reduces duplication of effort and assists in raising funding capital. Partnerships are essential within the community, especially with key stakeholders such as the AMBE, AFS, AEDA, Iohahi:io and NNATC. Additional key resources for the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan are as follows:

<u>ORGANIZATIONS AND UNIVERSITIES</u>	<u>COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES</u>	<u>GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS</u>
<p> Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Ahkwehsáhsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS) Iohahi:io Education & Training Centre Native North American Traveling College (NNATC) Akwesasne Economic Development Agency (AEDA) First Nations Education Council (FNEC) Johnson- O’Malley (JOM) Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (AIC) Ryerson University Lakehead University Western University Trent University </p>	<p> University of Toronto Six Nations Polytech Carleton University McGill University OISE/University of Toronto St. Lawrence College Algonquin College McMaster University First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) Concordia Syracuse University Potsdam State University St. Lawrence University SUNY Canton </p>	<p> Government of Canada Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Heritage Canada Health Canada (HC) Aboriginal Healing Foundation Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) </p>

ACTION PLAN

An action plan is a sequence of steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to succeed. Our Action Plan for 2017-2022 includes activities in the following six key areas:

1. Building capacity;
2. Lobbying and fundraising;
3. Curriculum and resource development;
4. A Mohawk Language Commission;
5. Marketing planning;
6. Language Health Needs Assessment.

An action plan lists what steps must be taken in order to achieve specific goals. The purpose of an action plan is to clarify what resources are required to reach the goal, formulate when specific tasks need to be completed and determine what resources are required. The specific activities of the MCA Mohawk language Strategic Plan are summarized below:

1. Building capacity
 - Partnerships with universities and colleges for the quickest route to Mohawk language certification programming e.g. SUNY Potsdam, St. Lawrence College,
 - Teacher and pedagogical training,
 - Specific Activities/Action Planning for capacity development.
2. Lobbying and fundraising;
 - Proposal and MCR supporting lobbying efforts for Mohawk Language preservation and revitalization,
 - Identifying resources: funding, literary and pedagogical (teaching tools and curriculum).
3. Curriculum and resource development;
 - Accredited Mohawk language programs and authority,
 - Curriculum development at all levels (early childhood, elementary, secondary, post-secondary and adult learning),
 - Alternate ways of learning the language – utilizing technology and other resources,
 - Establishing teaching methods based on best practices.

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4. A Mohawk Language Commission;
 - Establish a language commission and/or working group,
 - Establish a community Mohawk language law (for and from the people – Tri-Council).

 5. Marketing planning;
 - Internal Mohawk language conference or symposium for sharing resources,
 - Foster importance and vitality of Mohawk language to make the language more healthy,
 - Increased signage in Mohawk in the community to increase the visibility of the language ,
 - Increased use of the language in community activities.

 6. Language Health Needs Assessment.
 - Conduct a needs assessment to develop solutions to language loss based on hard data,
 - Survey teachers regarding their language teaching needs.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation is a process that helps improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. The monitoring and evaluation framework of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan is as follows:

1. Establish a Mohawk language accreditation board;
2. Incorporate a non-profit evaluation oversight board;
3. Monitor and evaluate teachers and curriculum;
4. Measure the increase (decrease) of Mohawk language usage within the community;
5. Monitoring and evaluation of fluency levels amongst children, teachers and adults.

OUTCOME MEASURES AND INDICATORS

An indicator provides evidence that certain results have, or have not, been achieved. Indicators enable decision-makers to assess progress towards the achievement of intended outputs, outcomes, goals, and objectives. The outcome measures and indicators for success of the MCA Mohawk Language Strategic Plan are:

1. Enact a Mohawk Language Law,
2. Increased number of Akwesasronon of all ages, especially children, who speak the Mohawk language.
3. Numbers of meetings that are conducted in Mohawk,
4. Evidence of language proficiency through an accredited language system,
5. Visibility of Mohawk language through increased numbers of signage, labeling of objects and places in Mohawk,
6. Availability of language resources and increased number of audio, visual, digital resources in our Mohawk language that are available,
7. Use of Elders as resources and increased numbers of Mohawk Elders, teachers and mentors,
8. The production and increased numbers of trained Mohawk language teachers,
9. Increased numbers of opportunities to speak the Mohawk language on a daily basis.

NEXT STEPS

The goals and strategies presented in this plan are based on extensive dialogue with key stakeholders, a Mohawk Language Community Survey and an environmental scan which were all conducted between October and December 2016.

The purpose of this plan is to coordinate language resources (financial and human) to meet the requirements of Mohawk language promotion, protection, preservation and revitalization within the context of a language crisis and as part of the MCA 2016 Strategic Plan. Urgent action is required to revitalize our language while sustaining our inherent rights, *facing challenges together so that we may build a strong and healthy future.*

The MCA principles regarding our language reflect our philosophy that:

Our community is the story of Akwesasne. We have to get back to the family unit, we need to know who we are, where we come from and what our evolution is. We need to preserve our land, culture and language in order to ensure our legacy for the future.

Our most treasured tradition is Ohenten kariwatekwen, our Thanksgiving Address, the words that come before all else. Our Elders give us direction and pass on Akwesasneronon knowledge to guide and teach us. It takes a community to raise a child. Our language, history, culture and our children are our future.

Priority 2 of the MCA Strategic Plan is well-being. Mohawk language is an essential part to the well-being of all Akwesasronon. Specifically:

Community gatherings, celebrations and family are the most treasured part of Akwesasne and that is what makes us strong and resilient. We take care of our families. Our families are our history, our legacy and our link to the past, present and future. In order to preserve and revitalize our culture and traditions we must invest in our future by using our language, living our culture and reaffirming our identity as Akwesasronon. The fundamental survival of a community and a culture is education, language and our traditional world view.

Priority 3 of the MCA Strategic Plan is sustainability. Mohawk language is an essential part of the sustainability of all Akwesasronon. Specifically:

Services that support employment outcomes and the advancement of our language and culture are required starting with daycare, primary, secondary and postsecondary education. School curriculum that is holistic and culturally based will ensure the preservation and revitalization of our Akwesasronon beliefs. Immersion programs, employee training, culture that is built into all MCA programming and increased language use in the community are our priority.

STRATEGIC FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The following framework outlines the funding priorities and requirements for this strategic plan. A five year proposal costing out these priorities is provided under separate cover.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH	ADULTS AND COMMUNITY	TRAINING AND CAPACITY	TECHNOLOGY
ECD – Preschool language programs	Higher education, adult, PSE programs	Language teacher training and development	Software, archive, websites, and technology
Youth language learning programs	Elder oral traditions	Language certification	TV, radio, social media, digital, etc.
K-12 programs	Language Law and Commission	Training for language teacher assistants	Language and culture
Parent language training	Community involvement	Advanced adult language programs	Publications and resources
Immersion	Needs assessment	Best practices	Mapping
Storytelling and publications	Resources and activities	Proficiency testing, evaluation, and monitoring	Standardization of curricula and templates

IMPLEMENTATION

This Mohawk Language Strategic Plan provides strategic direction and approaches that the key stakeholders, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne senior staff and district Chiefs have collectively identified. This plan speaks to the language crisis faced by Akwesasronon in terms of the loss of our language. Our language is declining and is *severely endangered*. All Akwesasronon have a role to play in keeping our language alive. Our history and traditions are important to our identity. They are incorporated in our language which must be preserved, promoted, protected and revitalized. Rebirth, healing (condolence) and empowerment will be restored through the revitalization, preservation, promotion and protection of our language. Let us restore our words in Mohawk: *Tsi kioóhnhet Onkwawerí:na Kanien'ké:ha*.

In order to gain the full benefit of this plan, it must be implemented in a way that will guide the actions of the Grand Chief, Council, staff and key stakeholders. *It must also remain in the minds of the people*. This plan must be used to guide lobby strategies and advocacy efforts. It can also be used as a basis of reporting and measuring the health of our language. Meetings are required to educate and inform Akwesasronon about the urgency of revitalizing our language so that we may revive our Kanien'kéha language as a living language within the hearts and minds of our children and families.

Tentitewa'keráhkwe ne onkwawerí:na aonsonto:nhnhéte' onkweriáhsakon tá:non' onkwanontsistakó'nhshon ne onkonkwe'tahshó n:a

Endnotes

ⁱ [SWOT Analysis Definition | Investopedia](http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/swot.asp#ixzz4VtCp2kFi) <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/swot.asp#ixzz4VtCp2kFi>

ⁱⁱ Iroquoian Languages www.mingolanguage.org/iroquoianlanguages.html

ⁱⁱⁱ SOROSORO So the languages of the world may live on! www.sorosoro.org/en/iroquoian-languages/

^{iv} Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) The Canadian Encyclopedia www.thecanadianencyclopeida.ca/en/article/iroquois/