

ANNUAL REPORT



SEVEN GENERATIONS EDUCATION INSTITUTE

A close-up photograph of a welder wearing a white protective suit and a blue welding mask. The welder is working on a metal structure, and bright sparks are flying from the welding point. The background is a blurred industrial setting with blue and yellow lighting.

2022

Message from our CEO

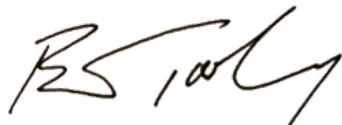
Boozhoo,

Ogimaabines Indigoo, Goojijiing Nindoonjii, Bizhiw Nindoodem.

Another successful year has passed us by. I feel very privileged to lead an organization that continues to demonstrate resilience despite the challenges that we have faced. The staff and students at SGEI should be proud of the growth that has been made regardless of the disruptive events that have unfolded over the last two years. Miigwech to the Board of Directors for their continued leadership, guidance, and dedication through these times of uncertainty.

I would also like to share my appreciation for the efforts that we have all made to prioritize the health and safety of our campuses, classrooms, and communities. I am especially grateful for the patience and understanding of the staff and students as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and the journey towards normalcy.

Despite it all, we have continued to prove that we are dedicated to excellence in lifelong learning and empowerment through language and culture. I am thrilled to showcase the opportunities, achievements, and overall progress made over the past year here at SGEI. Miigwech to those taking the time to read the Annual Report of 2021-2022 and as always, miigwech to the staff for their incredible support and to the students for persevering. I am so proud of your accomplishments.



Brent Tookenay,
CEO



Board members



Mitaanjigamiing First Nation

Naomi Field
Chairperson, Executive Member



Lac La Croix First Nation

Carol Geyshick
Board Member



Couchiching First Nation

Peggy Loyie
Vice Chair, Executive Member



Mikinaak Onigaming

Shawn Kelly
Board Member



Rainy River First Nations

Gary Medicine
Secretary/Treasurer



Naicatchewenin First Nation

Raechel Snowball
Board Member



Big Grassy First Nation

Fred Archie
Board Member



Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation

Clayton Windigo
Board Member



Big Island First Nation

Robert Handorgan
Board Member



Seine River First Nation

Roger Spencer
Board Member





Leadership and growth

Seven Generations Education Institute is valued for providing education and training opportunities reflected by the needs of local labour markets and surrounding First Nations Communities

Health Sciences

SGEI's health sciences programs have been growing to meet the demands of the Treaty #3 area and beyond. Our Bachelor of Science in Nursing students completed year two of their program with a pinning ceremony celebrating their achievements. In April, the Ontario government announced funding support for students entering the Personal Support Worker Diploma Program and Nursing Programs. Minister of Northern Development and Minister of Indigenous Affairs Greg Rickford made the announcement at our Niizhwaaching Aanikoobijigeng Gikinoo'amaadiiwigamig campus. This funding directly benefits our students at all three of our campuses.

Cultural curriculum development

Seven Generations Education Institute Secondary School developed a grade 11 course – NBV3C: World Views and Aspirations of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Communities in Canada. It includes locally relevant curriculum resources using Learning Bird. Students who take this course will learn how to understand Indigenous history, Indigenous worldviews, and expressions of culture, to name a few topics.

Linking our students has never been better

Our advanced technology Telepresence Rooms are now all complete and in use. Our Bachelor of Nursing program is using this technology for their program to link students across all campuses giving them a real-life feel of instruction and class connections.

Microsoft Office Certification

In the past year, SGEI has implemented Microsoft Office certifications using Jasperactive. Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel have been two of the programs taught thus far. Offered to the public and staff, these courses go in-depth creating a strong knowledge of programs used daily for more efficient use of time.

Creating efficient buildings

We strive to make improvements at SGEI campuses that will not only do better for the environment, but help our bottom-line costs. This year at our Manidoo Baawaatig campus, we replaced the entire first floor of lights with LED bulbs. This saw significant savings of more than \$10,000 over a six-month period compared to the previous year's costs. Buildings have also seen innovative upgrades requiring less overall maintenance and better air quality with new HVAC systems.

Communication is key

SGEI's communication and marketing department have been implementing the institute's brand strategy to stay focussed on ensuring the Treaty #3 area keeps informed about our success milestones throughout the past year. This includes keeping our website and services information up to date, our social media channels with fresh on-brand content and current branded advertisements in curated markets to ensure we are catching the attention of the right people.

Bail Residency Program

We engaged with the Ministry of the Attorney General on a project to support individuals involved in the justice system in Kenora through the bail residence program and the planned community justice centre.

A classroom was established with a dedicated teacher at the Brail Residency Program (BRP) facility to provide educational services for their clients. We had six residents graduate from the BRP in the 2021-2022 school year.

Paperless workplace

SGEI's goal of going paperless is moving forward at full speed. All staff forms are now digitized and with the implementation of AP Beanworks as of April 1, we can streamline our purchase order system with little paper needed to complete day-to-day transactions. Our implementation of Office 365 has enabled a seamless way for employees to interact with each other, collaborate on projects and communicate their needs all in one portal.

Creative thinking at SGEI's Makerspace

In the past year, we have introduced our Makerspace! It is sparking creativity with STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math. With huge success over the summer, our Makerspace hosted several summer camps for children, teens and adults. This gave the Niizhwaaching Aanikoobijigeng Gikinoo'amaadiiwigamig community at large an invitation to learn about the tools available they can use to create from the ground up. Creating with 3D printers, laser cutters, sewing machines, cultural crafts, and more, engaged campers at all learning levels.



Creating classroom spaces in Sioux Lookout

Our Sioux Lookout campus has seen a significant addition in the past year with the completion of our culinary program classroom space. This will enable an excellent functioning environment to welcome new students in an engaging space. Working with the new building owners, the Kenora District Services Board, has been a pleasure and means continuing to strengthen relationships for a better student experience.

YESS Program

SGEI worked with the YESS Program (Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program) to hire 10 young people to engage them in various career experiences, including leadership roles, maintenance, administrative and more. We were glad to have these bright minds join us over the summer months.

Sparkling the future at Welding Camp

Young participants ages 12-17 interested in the trades had the chance to attend SGEI's Mind over Metal welding camp. Seven Generations Education Institute teamed up with the Rainy River District School Board, CWB Welding Foundation and New Gold to bring back the camp this year. Participants had a week full of learning in our machine shop including safe welding techniques and manipulation. Participants were able to complete the most projects at this year's camp than ever before.

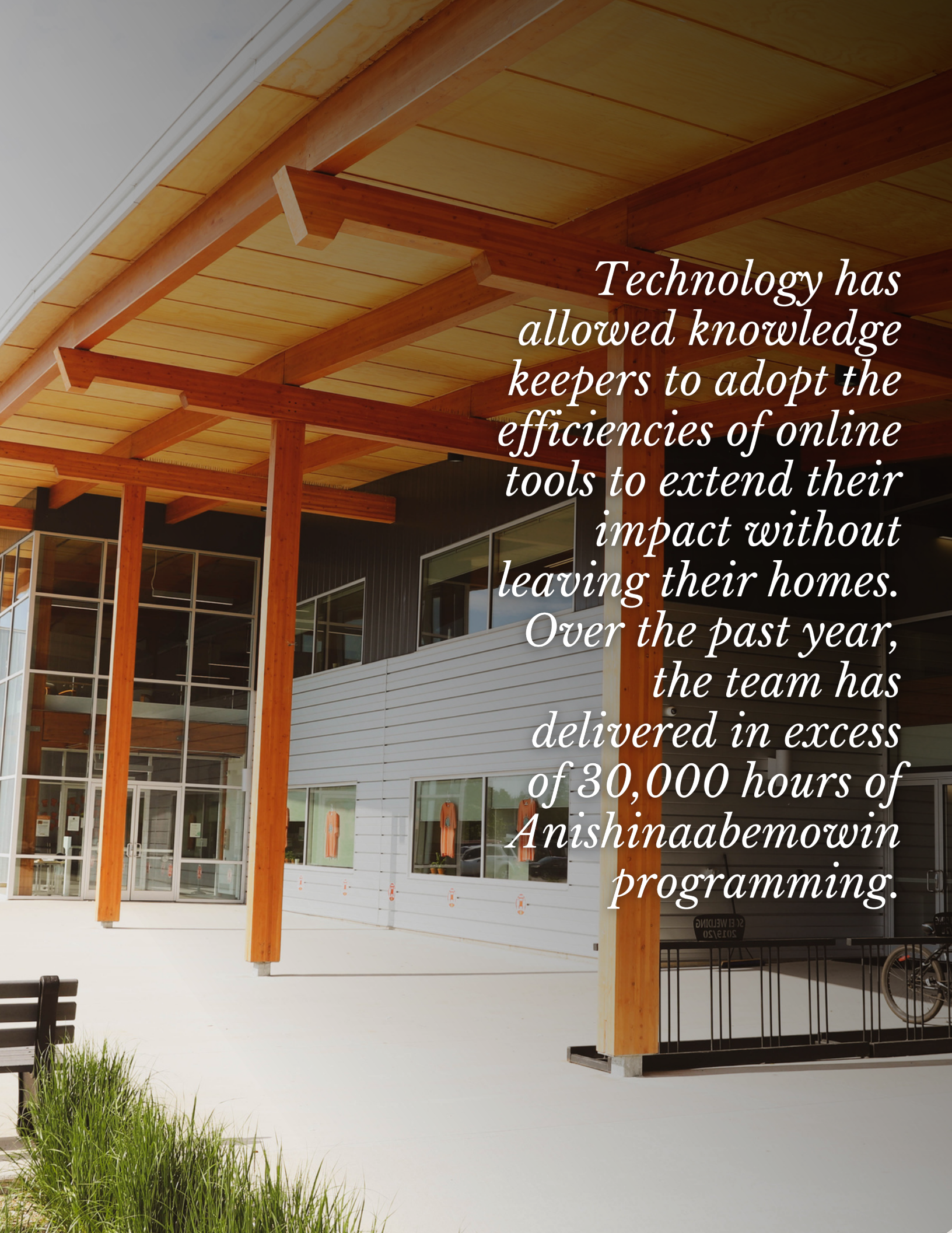
Strong staff for great education

Seven Generations Education Institute's overall turnover rate for all our positions and have been low. As we grow, we continue to meet the employment needs of our organization and community needs along with creating new opportunities for our students, staff, and communities. We continue to lead in a positive and professional manner that brings knowledge and talented individuals who make SGEI a great place to work.

OSAP micro-credentials

Training for Employment continues to grow micro-credential opportunities through OSAP. SGEI is approved to deliver 25 micro-credentials - up from 11 the year previous. These include Construction Craft Worker, Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills, Culinary, Driver's Training and Employment Readiness. Students in micro-credential programs will obtain industry-recognized certifications and be able to apply for grants and loans to cover the cost of their training.



A photograph of a modern building with a prominent wooden pergola structure. The pergola has thick wooden beams and columns, creating a covered outdoor area. The building behind it has large glass windows and a white facade. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Technology has allowed knowledge keepers to adopt the efficiencies of online tools to extend their impact without leaving their homes. Over the past year, the team has delivered in excess of 30,000 hours of Anishinaabemowin programming.



Language and culture

"On a most important note, the continued commitment to building language infrastructure and sustainability is starting to see benefits returning back to the initiative."

When the strategy started, very few available or recognized language resources were evident with the exception of a few language knowledge keepers. By defaulting to community-led programming and Anishinaabeg-led advisement of products created, programs, many resources - assets and people - have been developed. These have been honed to support the future advancement of more initiatives. The mentor learner program literally had no speaker teachers available when the idea was incubated. The adult language class produced some capable staff who created classrooms and content for the software development. The adult facilitator program produced people capable of taking the mentor learner students to provide another year and a half of conversational Ojibwe. The adult class is training a new instructor for a 3-year period so more options can be provided. As the adult class progresses, the instructor is building a textbook to help future learners. [Each initiative supports the growth of another.](#)

- WaawaateGiizhigook - Shannon King
Gaa-niigaanishkang Anishinaabemodaa Anokiwiin

Supporting Anishinaabemowin language for the future

Anishinaabemowin Facilitator Program was a six-month paid part-time program (20 hr/week) for fluent speakers who were interested in language revitalization and learning from other fluent speakers who have experience teaching their language. The intent was to have experienced teachers of Anishinaabemowin pass on some of their teaching experiences, methods and tools for teaching Anishinaabemowin. We had 52 applications and 17 graduates.

Technology for language revitalization

A significant effort is spent on the development, distribution and training for the Anishinaabemodaa online learning app integrating the conjugation tool, Text to Speech, Avatar technology and Modular lessons. The software itself is scheduled for more development, but in a pilot context, it encompassed 495 regular students and a dozen teachers. One hundred and twenty learning modules are complete, with an additional 120 underway.

Staff language learning

The Anishinaabemodaa - Waking Up Ojibwe program hosted Anishinaabemotaadidaa for SGEI staff. 20 staff members from across all campuses participated in this ten-week virtual learning experience with our team and gained an understanding of basic pronunciation, introductory skills, and grammar concepts.

Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) leading the way

We hosted a series of online workshops for our local ECEs, educators, and the general Anishinaabemowin learning public. Ninanda-gikendaan Ji-anishinaabemowin was a seven-session program offered over the school year, and the recordings remain available through our website and YouTube channel. Overall, we directly reached approximately 200 participants with valuable learning resources and access to knowledge keepers. On January 28, 2022, SGEI hosted the 5th annual Anishinaabemowin Ando-gikendamowin for Early Childhood Educators. We joined together for this virtual gathering of 150 participants for a day of networking, breakout session workshops, a keynote speech, and a panel discussion. The day was filled with inspiring messages of hope, perseverance, and the importance of building relationships within our learning communities.

Incorporating Indigenous Culture into school culture

Our team spent the day harvesting wild rice for a local elder as part of a team building and community engagement exercise. We received teachings on Manomin (wild rice) as well as, demonstrated the importance of helping our elders. We utilized our monthly public professional development (PD) sessions to bring in knowledge keepers to share the importance of Bagijiganan (offerings). Our monthly public sessions are recorded and available on our website. Our spring team building day was dedicated to asemaa (tobacco). Utilizing the knowledge from our SGEI staff, the team received teachings on harvesting asemaa and made asemaa for the following years' future programs.

Anishinaabemodaa

On the childcare front, capacity is being built by helping the childcare workers pass on Anishinaabemowin to the kids in their care. Over 60 books and 12 children's shows are now available in Anishinaabemowin, with every title being created at the request of daycares, parents or teachers. We have 4000 regular weekly visitors on the Wakingupojibwe.ca website to retrieve content. These numbers indicate the value being provided as most visitors come from Ottawa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Manitoba, Alberta and, of course, Ontario.

An offering...

Children learned to make yellow tobacco ties to offer to one of the helpers of the language Aginjibagwesi (yellow Goldfinch). This is a teaching given to us by the Jones family to pass to anyone who wants to learn Anishinaabemowin. A children's book was created on it and helps children learn numbers in the language, too. wakingupojibwe.ca

Virtual Family Night: Aginjibagwesi Gaye Gaa-wiji'itwaawaad

Aginjibagwesi Gaye Gaa-wiji'itwaawaad (Goldfinch and Helpers) is a language program developed for early years (0-6) settings focusing on beginning Anishinaabemowin sounds, cultural teachings from local elders and interactive holistic activities. This program was offered in a virtual setting with 6 families participating (25 participants). During the 6-week course beginning March 2022, families were supplied with books, resource guides, song lyrics, stuffed animals, craft materials and supper for the whole household. Led by the Gaa-wiji-odaamin'aad Abinoojiiya' Ji-Anishinaabemowin worker, families and children sang songs, read books, played games and interacted using Anishinaabemowin.



Fall Harvest

SGEI hosted our annual Fall Harvest in person, and we had several classes attend. Fall Harvest is an immersive two-day cultural experience demonstrating Anishinaabe fall harvesting practices to students from participating schools. Fall harvest is a unique opportunity for students to learn about Treaty #3 and food sovereignty and participate in traditional practices. Some teachings include learning about the grandfather drum, bannock making, traditional medicines and wild rice harvesting.



Azhemiinigoziwin Program

The Azhemiinigoziwin Program was launched last year as a nine-month women's empowerment program focused on helping young women regain their strength by learning essential life skills, Anishinaabe teachings, education, and job preparation. Women graduating from this program are empowered to enter their next stage of life, whether completing high school, entering post-secondary or seeking employment with confidence and success.

These students learned through five main focuses: education, culture, Anishinaabemowin (language), wellness and life skills. Students from this program have the opportunity to continue on to graduate high school or pursue post-secondary education.

SGEI Speaker Series

About once a month, SGEI hosted an Indigenous speaker to share stories, information and interesting aspects of their careers over a Zoom presentation. Guests included Michelle Desrosier, Dr. Leroy Little Bear, John Borrows and more. This series is open to the public and between 50-100 people attended each session.

Book Club

Staff and students are encouraged to participate in the SGEI book club featuring Indigenous writers and topics. The group deep dives into the subject matter for open discussions surrounding cultural topics. One feature novel included *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice.



*Aabaakawizidaa Ji-
azhe-anishinaabemowing
- Let's Wake Ourselves
Up to Speak Our
Language Again*





Learner support and access

Seven Generations Education Institute offers a greater likelihood of success. Our unparalleled student supports remove barriers so our learners can focus on education.

COVID-19

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, SGEI continued to persevere as the worldwide pandemic pressed on. All campuses implemented health and safety screening procedures to keep staff and students' safety our top priority. During this time, students were supported with a mix of online learning and in-person education, working within the changing provincial restrictions. Seven Generations Education Institute supported aspects of the entire Treaty #3 area and wanted to ensure our campuses were doing our best to help limit the spread of the virus while maintaining our learning support systems.

First Nation Student Success Program

SGEI secondary School worked to facilitate Google classroom in schools to support digital teaching in areas that are establishing high-speed Internet at the school and in student homes. This includes options for eLearning and increases course offerings to students in more remote settings. Equipment delivery arrangements were made, personal protective equipment was supplied, and training for teachers, including the use of literacy assessment tools, was achieved. Teachers were also training to facilitate canoe skills courses which translated into some outdoor education opportunities.

Education for all

In partnership with Borderland Pride in Fort Frances, we helped launch June's Pride Month events by raising a pride flag proudly in front of our building. Manidoo Baawaatig also raised its flag for the month of June. We will always welcome students of all orientations, backgrounds and cultures to a safe school environment we hope enriches each student's educational experience.

Partnering for Indigenous health care

SGEI's nursing program partnered with Kenora Chiefs Advisory to train nurses in cervical screening in First Nation communities with an approach to cultural sensitivities connected to women's health. Eight nurses completed the certification course.

Driving schools

SGEI's Fort Frances and Kenora campuses continued their successful driver's education program and, in addition, Sioux Lookout also received programming. SGEI is an MTO-approved Beginner Driver Education (BDE) course provider. SGEI employs a blended learning approach involving in-class, in-car, online, and simulated curricula to provide learners with superior driving education. SGEI employs full-time and three part-time driving instructors. The summer of 2022 enabled us to run in-person lessons once again and we ran three sold-out classes at our Fort Frances campus.

Supporting employment through wage subsidies

Training for Employment staff have been communicating with our First Nations communities, training partners and employers to maintain and strengthen relationships. In the past year, SGEI had 36 employers participate in our program, directly leading to job opportunities for our students. We also trained 11 incumbent workers.

Online learning support specialists

SGEI's IT and Media department continues to utilize its two Online Learning Support Specialists at the Fort Frances and Kenora campuses to support instructors with new technology and tools and further engage students in online learning. During much of the year with many programs being mostly online as the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way learning took place, their skills enabled student success during challenging times. They worked with Brightspace D2L, Zoom, Office 365, and more.

Cultural workshops

SGEI's hosted cultural workshops in the past year, including making hand drums, ribbon shirts and skirts, and harvesting birch bark. Working with our cultural lead, it's always a key component of our programming to incorporate Indigenous culture and creativity.

Awards for excellence in language

Seven Generations Education Institute Secondary School created a new Anishinaabemowin Merit award in conjunction with Fort Frances High School that will be given to a graduating student who has taken four years of Ojibway language programming in high school. This type of recognition is meant to reward current achievements and encourage others towards excellence.

Digital communication outreach

The Communications and Marketing department uses online tools to communicate with students and the Treaty #3 area on an almost daily basis. Our Facebook page saw over 100,000 engagements in the past year and over 15,000 on Instagram (and growing). Our website averages 24 users per minute and has visitors primarily from Canada, but visitors from all over the world are common. Our most read sections include our cultural-based blog postings and views for our post-secondary programming. Our digital marketing reach, radio partners, and other advertisers have expanded our audience. We have about 800 subscribers and growing for our monthly eNewsletter with an average open rate of 51% (above average for email marketing).





Class of 2022

We were proud to showcase graduates in person this year!

In-person convocation

For the first time in two years, students were able to graduate in person and cross a stage to receive their diplomas or degrees. We held ceremonies at Manidoo Baawaatig and Niizhwaaching Aanikoobijigeng Gikino’amaadiiwigamig. Between the two facilities, over 500 proud family members congratulated the students’ successes. The event featured live drumming, a blessing from our elders, remarks from dignitaries, a keynote speech from Ted Nolan, awards and bursaries, and diploma presentations.

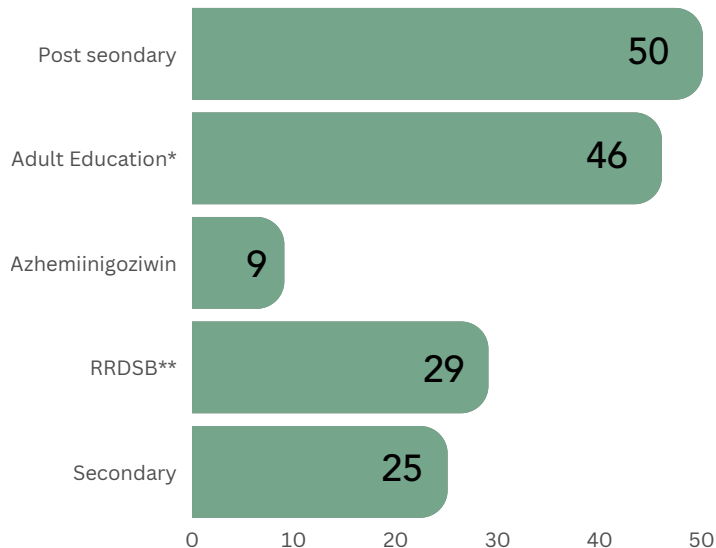
Training for Employment

Throughout 2021-2022 fiscal year ending March 31, Training for Employment had 89 participants join in a mixed learning environment - online and in-person. Despite COVID-19 challenges, there were 145 summer participants and 44 Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills participants.

Post-Secondary Student Support Program

During the 2021-2022 school year, SGEI's Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) funded 214 post-secondary students, 37 of whom graduated. Fifty-nine Post-Secondary students were awarded scholarships for academic achievement, strategic program enrolment and incentives. PSSSP distributed \$2,300,000 to students, \$332,000 in Covid-19 support funding, and \$52,000 in scholarships.

2022 SGEI Graduates



*SGEI's Adult Education program is provided in partnership with Keewatin-Patricia District School Board.

**SGEI supports Indigenous students at Fort Frances High School and Rainy River High School through its Elementary and Secondary Support Program in partnership with the Rainy River District School Board.

#MYSGEI

