

**Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Committee
By-Laws**

MISSION STATEMENT

The original spoken language of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian community is in a critical state of loss. If action is not taken immediately the language that was spoken for thousands of years will be lost forever. The mission of the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Committee (ALRC) is to bring Anishinaabemowin back to the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal community and generate fluent first language speakers. Anishinaabemowin is vital to our Tribal sovereignty and the survival of our people.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Respect all things that are placed upon this earth – whether it be people, plants or animals.
- Honor other people's thoughts, wishes and words. Never interrupt another or mock them. Allow each person the right to personal expression.
- Never speak of others in a negative way. The negative energy that you put out into the universe will multiply when it returns to you.
- Negative thoughts cause illness of the mind, body and spirit. Always practice optimism.
- Children are the seeds of our future. Plant love in their hearts and nurture them with wisdom from life's lessons. When they are grown, give them space to flourish.
- Avoid hurting the hearts of others. The poison of your pain affects our entire nation.
- Be truthful at all times. Honesty is the test of one's will within this universe.
- Be responsible for your own actions. The impact of decisions made today will affect those who will follow seven generations from now.
- Be true to yourself. You cannot nurture and help others if you cannot nurture and help yourself.
- Respect other's spiritual beliefs. Do not force your ways onto others.

I SANCTION AND AUTHORITY

The ALRC was established by Tribal Council Resolution NO. 08-103 to revitalize and restore fluency of Anishinaabemowin, the first language of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. The status of our spoken language is at a critical state of loss, therefore, the authority to develop cohesive language programs for the community is of the utmost importance.

II PURPOSE

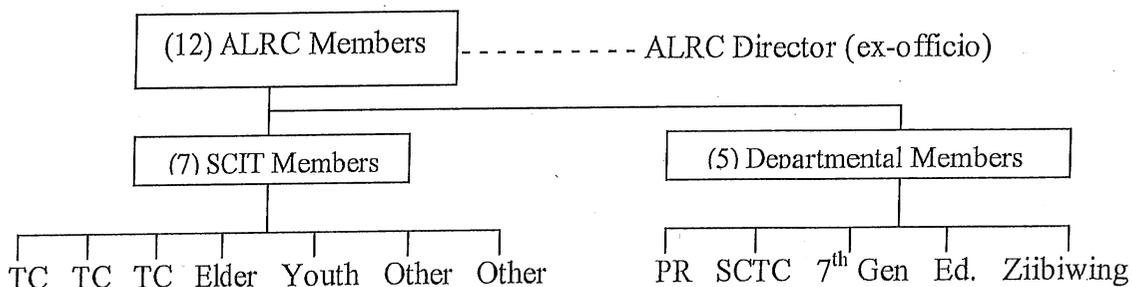
We are thankful for the ALRC who will provide leadership and oversight for the restoration of Anishinaabemowin. The ALRC shall envision and develop a plan of action

which includes the natural way of language acquisition¹. Established goals and objectives will be monitored to assure follow-through as envisioned in the plan. Routine reports shall be provided to the Tribal Council, the partners of the language programs and a quarterly report to the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal community.

III MEMBERSHIP

All who serve shall represent the youth, the children, and the unborn of our nation. Every ALRC member must operate with a true Anishinaabe philosophy to commit their spirit, heart, and mind to the work. All meetings will begin with ahnaymayawin² because we are thankful for life and for all things created.

The ALRC shall consist of twelve members. The make up of the committee shall include the following: of seven members must be Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Members, three must be Tribal Council members and the remaining four shall be comprised of members from the Tribal community with at least one elder representative (age 50 years and older) and one youth representative (age 18 to 25 years). The ALRC Director will serve as an ex-officio member. The ALRC will also include one representative from the following departments that have an active Anishinaabemowin funding or components: Public Relations, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Seventh Generation, Tribal Education, and Ziibiwing Center. Those members will represent their department as the head spokesperson.



Non-Anishinaabe may be appointed and serve as department representatives, but will not be allowed to vote or offset a quorum, and shall function as honorary members. Four honorary members may be appointed by Tribal Council as recommended by the ALRC.

Membership shall be provided to newly activated departments pending ALRC recommendation and Tribal Council appointment.

A Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be called giigdonini or giigdoninikwe³. There will be no Secretary or Treasurer; however a Public Relations Officer shall be selected from the ALRC membership.

IV ANISHINAABE QUORUM

An Anishinaabe quorum constitutes ALL members of the committee, as ALL MEMBERS must be present and participate at every meeting to fulfill the ALRC's commitment to revitalize and secure the language for the next seven generations. In the

event the ALRC must resort to the status quo of western bureaucratic procedure, a quorum will be at least seven members present with five of those being Saginaw Chippewa Tribal members.

V CONSENSUS DECISIONS

ARLC bylaws will include our original Anishinaabe culture and values as our ancestors practiced throughout their lives. As prophesized by our ancestors, our generation desires to return to our traditional customs and practices for group decision making. Therefore the ALRC will act or practice in the following manner: Exercise patience at all times. All opinions shared are valued.

Traditional mtigoonsag⁴ will be brought to all meetings. All mtigoonsag must be cast and counted before the group proceeds to the next order of business. Every member must be satisfied with the course of action taken or agreement upon before the group proceeds. If a member is not satisfied, more discussion will take place until compromise or inclusion of all ideas have been considered or shared. Each member is valued and their commitment is honored. In our circle, each member shall have the opportunity to share their view and be heard by the group. Attendance and participation at meetings is of the utmost importance. An individual's contribution to the group shall make us stronger and more effective.

VI ATTENDANCE

As stated, an individual's contribution to the group shall make us stronger and more effective. Lack of attendance shall be discussed and action shall be taken as necessary by the ALRC once an individual has missed three meetings in a six month period.

VII ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The Tribal Council shall appoint the members of the ALRC as vacancies become available. As stated in III Membership: Letters of Interest shall be submitted to the ALRC. The ALRC shall provide recommendations for Tribal Council appointment.

Voting members of the Committee shall be appointed to staggered terms of service as follows, following the initial term of appointment to the ALRC.

Four (4) members----- four (4) year term of office

Four (4) members----- three (3) year term of office

Three (3) members----- two (2) year term of office

Following the initial appointment board members shall draw lots to identify their individual term of office. In subsequent appointments the term of office for vacancies shall be announced on the advertisement for appointment consistent with the board member term that is expiring.

VIII MEETINGS

The ALRC shall meet once each month and as needed as determined by the giigdonini or giigdoninikwe. Subcommittees may be appointed by the giigdonini or giigdoninikwe as needed. Meetings are open to all community members and fellow associates who have a desire to learn and support the Anishinaabe language revitalization efforts. The ALRC Director and/or designee shall provide public notification of scheduled meetings.

IX GIIGDONINI/GIIGDONINIKWE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILTIES

- Will provide leadership for the ALRC meeting and lead talking circle discussion and group decision making.
- May act as a public spokesperson on behalf of the ALRC.
- Will assist the ALRC Director to establish the meeting agenda and subcommittees as agreed upon by the ALRC members.
- Shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the other giigdonini/giigdoninikwe in the absence of one or the other.
- Will assist the ALRC Director in maintaining accurate reporting and records of the ALRC meetings held, actions taken, and decisions made by consensus in the form of meeting minutes.
- Will assist the ALRC Director in keeping the current budget available for the ALRC committee to review as needed.
- Will assist the ALRC Director and Public Relations Officer to provide communication to the Tribal Council and Tribal newspaper on behalf of the ALRC.

¹ Natural way of language acquisition: As children we all have learned English by listening and slowly grasping concepts to make things comprehensible. By actions, facial expressions, tone of voice and vocalizations we learned words, phrases, sentences and eventually came to learn to speak English. We began to understand and comprehend. This is called the “natural way of learning”. The “natural way” we believe is the best way to acquire our Anishinaabemowin.

² ahnaymayawin: refers to a prayer or petition to the Creator.

³ giigdonini or giigdoninikwe describes the man or woman who is the leader (spokesperson) of a group.

⁴ mtigoonsag: refers to traditional voting sticks.