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PRESS RELEASE

5-Year Community Language Plan to launch at public celebration on April 26

For immediate release

Kahnawà:ke Education Center (KEC) (Kahnawà:ke, Quebec – 23 Onerahtókha / April 2018) – The Kahnawà:ke Education Center is pleased to announce the launch of the “*Skátne Enionkwaió’ten*” (We will all work together) 5-Year Community Language Plan. The community is invited to the launch and public celebration scheduled for Thursday, April 26th, 2018 from 2-3pm at the Kahnawake Survival School. The 5-Year Community Language Plan for 2018-2022 will be released online and limited print copies will be distributed at the launch celebration.

The 5-Year Plan is the result of funding received from Aboriginal Peoples’ Program (APP) Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI). The KEC, Kanien’kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC), and the Iakwahwatsiratátie Language Nest partnered on this project to ensure the Plan is rooted in genuine collaboration, and considers the current needs of Kahnawà:ke in the area of Kanien’kéha language revitalization.

Two successful strategic planning sessions, one in November 2017 and one this past January, brought community stakeholders together to take an inventory of language initiatives and to develop a plan to address how to move forward with a whole-community, collaborative approach. Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey, KEC Kanien’kehá:ka Curriculum Developer and Project Leader was happy with the involvement of community stakeholders at the sessions. “It was great to bring everyone together to work on the Plan,” states Stacey. “The planning sessions had even more participation than we initially expected. Youth, elders and many community language workers and advocates dedicated themselves to focus on developing Kahnawà:ke’s plan. The 5-year plan is a commitment from everyone to move out efforts forward, that’s what will bring the plan to life”.

Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean, hired as the Skátne Enionkwaió’ten Community Language Plan Coordinator, is actively working on the planning, development, and translation of the Plan, as well as the creation of a website that the committee is hoping to present at the launch. “We want a place where community members will be able to view the Plan, and to read and review documents from the planning sessions in greater detail,” states Whitebean. “We are also hoping to use the website as a resource to give progress updates in the future as the plan is implemented.” The KEC has invested in the project beyond the APP/ALI funding deadline of March 31st which allows continued work for an additional 8 weeks from April 1st to mid-June to ensure that the 5-Year Plan is disseminated into the community. “We want to ensure that Skátne Enionkwaió’ten remains an active initiative in the community moving forward, including working with the Tewahará:tat tsi Niionkwarihò:ten Language and Culture Network,” states Whitebean.

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