Title: Keeping Language in Place
Presenter: Mark Klein

Biography: Mark Klein has been a teacher and administrator in the La Loche/Clearwater area for the past 28 years. During his time with Clearwater River Dene School, he has collaborated with leadership, community members, and professional teaching staff to implement a Dene transitional immersion program that is currently in its 11th year. Mark, originally a graduate from the University of Regina, has also completed his master's program in second language teaching through the University of Calgary.

Abstract: Over the past 11 years, the staff of Clearwater River Dene School (CRDS) have designed and implemented a comprehensive approach to bilingual education. It serves to promote both oral and written literacy in both the Denesuline and English languages. It begins with students being immersed in a Dene Language Nest in the Head Start and K4 programs. At the core of our program is the Transitional Immersion Model where Dene is the First language of early instruction. English is slowly introduced after the foundation of the Dene language has been firmly entrenched. Students learn in both languages from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The final piece of our program is a one of a kind community based four year B. Ed program where students will specialize in becoming Dene language specialists within an immersion context. CRDS is the only place in North America where students are learning an Indigenous Language from head start to the Bachelor level in the same building. Discussions and planning for a language based master's program for our current B.Ed. teachers are well underway. This would serve to provide local instructors for future teacher education programs. This will support a self-sustaining approach to community language revitalization.

Learning Outcomes: Participants will:

- Gain an understanding of the steps involved for one communities comprehensive approach to language revitalization.