

SICC FNLKC Abstract

Workshop Title: Nipugtugewei Nature-Based Kindergarten

Name of Presenters: Joyce Germain, Brenda Germain

Joyce Germain and Brenda Germain (Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation) work at the Alaqsite'w Gitpu School in Listuguj, Quebec. Joyce has been teaching Mi'gmaq immersion classes for almost 20 years, and has developed programs for Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2. Brenda and Joyce work together, one in English and the other in Mi'gmaq, to increase interest in the language among students and their parents.

Abstract: The presenters will share the success of their nature-based kindergarten model and provide advice for others who are interested in moving towards immersion kindergarten with an outdoors component. In addition, participants who have developed or want to develop nature-based immersion programs within their own communities will be invited to create a network together. This workshop fits perfectly with the conference theme because it shows how to awaken the youngest members of a community with their language. During the workshop, the presenters will discuss the Listuguj Context and Nipugtugewei Kindergarten and sharing of photographs, share details and examples of immersion teaching, and of Joyce and Brenda's collaboration at their school and end with questions, answers and discussion.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

- Learn the benefits of nature-based kindergarten for language and culture learning,
- Learn specific techniques that work in immersion kindergarten (e.g., using photographs and artifacts collected on the land to stimulate learning in the classroom; assessing language learning with an indigenous approach; and using the Smartboard effectively);
- For communities who are unable to launch into full immersion, they offer advice on gradually incorporating more and more language content while still benefiting from the cultural component that nature-based kindergarten offers.