

STRATEGIC PLAN

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KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK
BOARD OF EDUCATION



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INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Board of Directors for Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) set out a goal of reviewing its 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and building a renewed goal-oriented plan for the next five years (2023-2027).

This new plan is being introduced as we emerge from a global pandemic and focuses on creating unity for all KOBÉ departments, programs, and communities.

This plan highlights the voices of community, members, and staff through its processes. It will serve as a guide to help ensure a focus on activities and programs as KOBÉ remains true to its mandate. The plan is designed to be flexible and a living document to aid KOBÉ on its five-year journey in supporting the delivery of quality education programs and support to the Keewaytinook Okimakanak communities.

Through the feedback process and our internal-external analysis, we've outlined five strategic themes in which the communities will be able to see how their comments and contributions have helped shape this plan. The five strategic directions include; Language & Culture, Identity, Programs, People, and Community Engagement.

This document outlines the vision, goals, and term activities for each strategic direction.

“The purpose of KOBÉ is to guide the next generations and give them the tools they need to not only succeed but to flourish.”

BACKGROUND

Keewaytinook Okimakanak, which means Northern Chiefs in Oji-Cree, is a non-political Chiefs Council serving Deer Lake, Fort Severn, Keewaywin, McDowell Lake, North Spirit Lake, and Poplar Hill First Nations.

The organization is directed by the Chiefs of the member First Nations who form the Board of Directors. The Council provides services in health, education, economic development, employment assistance, legal, public works, finance and administration, and computer communications (K-Net Services). The Executive Director liaises with the six Chiefs, the Council staff, and other organizations and governments.

Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education consists of the same communities of Fort Severn, Poplar Hill, Deer Lake, North Spirit Lake, Keewaywin, and McDowell Lake. The KOBE is challenged with the duty to provide second-level services to each Local Education Authority in the form of staff professional development, policy development, and procedures to provide direction for local planning and implementation. The KOBE has undergone a structural building process enabling the development of plans, policies, and curriculum adoption and is ultimately focusing on performance to ensure improved outcomes for students within the Board. During this process, the communities were very clear on the importance of ensuring that the students develop their language and culture within the learning environments and that they are academically ready to compete with the provincial students when they enter high school.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK SECONDARY STUDENT SERVICES (KOSSS)



Since 2009, Keewaytinook Okimakanak Secondary School Services (KOSSS) has administered off-reserve secondary education and support services for students from the six KO communities. KOSSS staff is located in Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Dryden, and at the Pelican Falls Centre. Their vision focuses on healthy, sustainable communities in which First Nations people succeed without losing their identity and have the courage to make positive change.

KEEWAYTINOOK OKIMAKANAK INTERNET HIGH SCHOOL (KIHS)



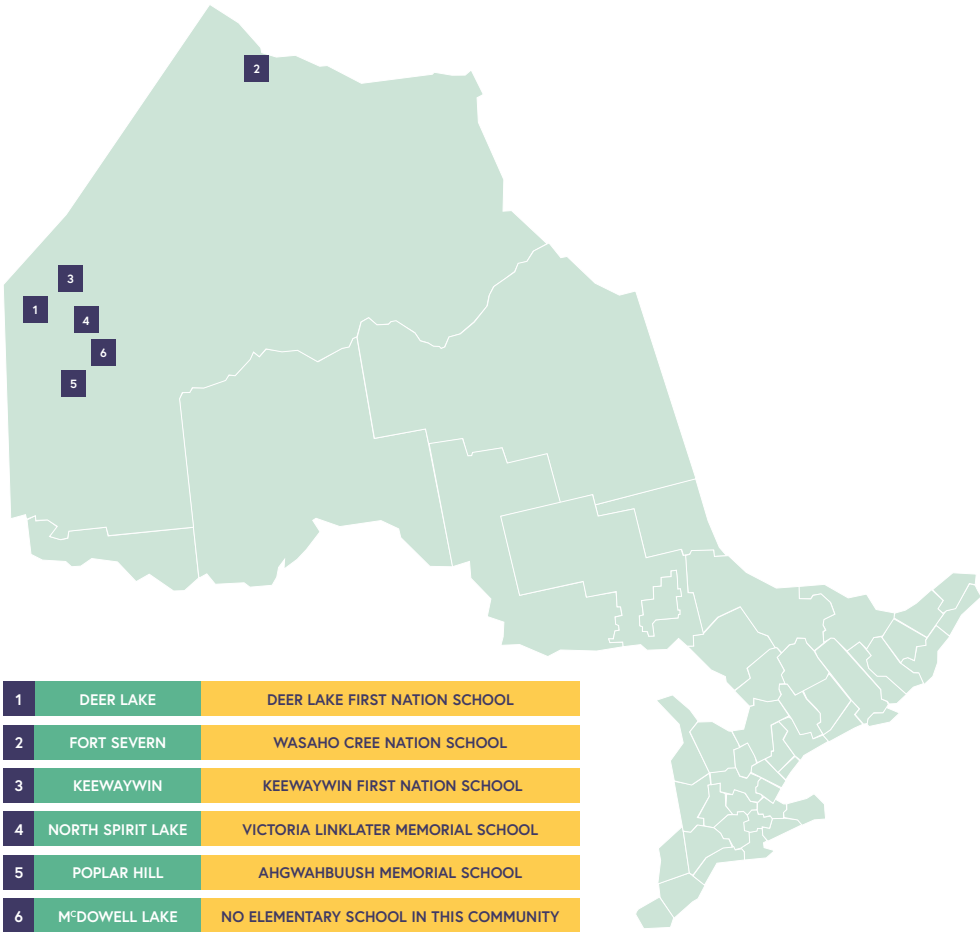
Keewaytinook Internet High School (KiHS) delivers accredited high school courses through an online education platform. In line with KOBE's mandate, KiHS supports the six Keewaytinook Okimakanak communities.

“KOBE has played a very important role for educators whose heart is for the students’ success and good life. The goals will be realized if the educators are equipped with KOBE programs, training, resources, and support.”



COMMUNITIES & SCHOOLS

Keewaytinook Okimakanak, which means Northern Chiefs in Oji-Cree, is a non-political Chiefs Council serving the communities of Fort Severn, Keewaywin, Deer Lake, North Spirit Lake, Poplar Hill, and McDowell Lake First Nations. Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) provides educational programs and services to these communities in the following schools:



The leadership has mandated the Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) within the Keewaytinook Okimakanak communities to coordinate their educational programming. KOBÉ is committed to seeing the growth of educational programs and services in these communities and weaving each community's diverse and rich history and traditions into all its academic planning while continuously "Moving Education Forward." The Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) continues to look for opportunities to improve and enhance programs and services offered through various departments that support staff and students in the Keewaytinook Okimakanak schools.



MISSION & VISION

The heart of any organization is the Mission & Vision, this is no different for KOBE. These are the guiding principles:

MISSION

KOBE is committed to weaving the communities' diverse and rich history and traditions into all its academic planning while continuously "Moving Education Forward".

VISION

The KOBE vision focuses on healthy sustainable communities. We foresee a future where the results of our efforts create a positive influence in the lives of children and their parents. The vision sees a world in which First Nations people succeed without loss of their identity and have courage to change their world according to their values.

MANDATE

Under the direction of the Keewaytinook Okimakanak Chiefs Resolution Number 2007-12-05-4 and 2007-12-05-16, KOBE is mandated to deliver a full range of quality support services as follows;

- 3.1 Administration of off-reserve Secondary School Student Support Services
- 3.2 Other Related Education Programs
- 3.3 KOBE will report to the Chiefs annually or when called upon to do so.

PROCESS

Outreach campaigns with KOBE stakeholders were held using various methods such as; online surveys, group meetings, internal working groups, and a community visit.

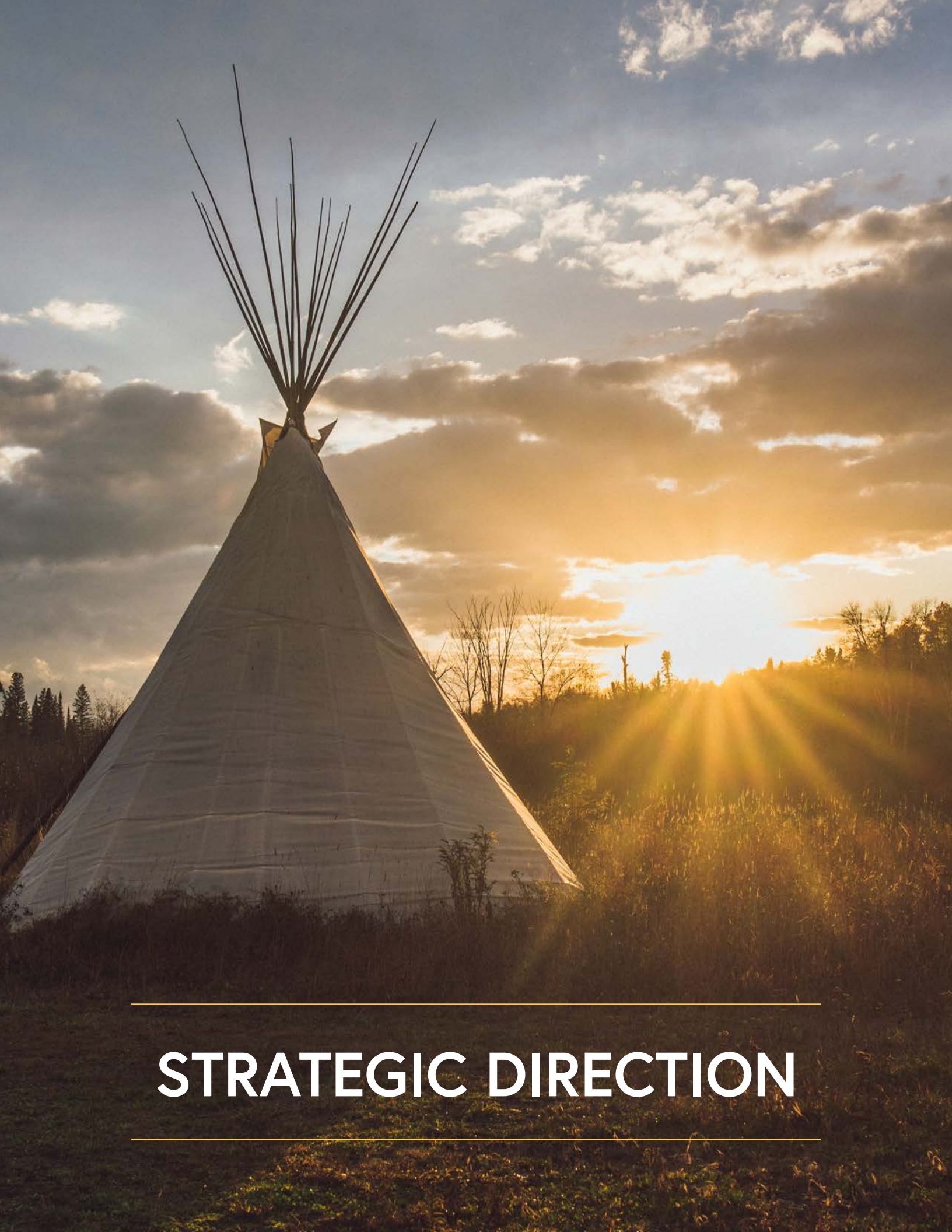
SCHEDULE OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

GROUP	ACTIVITY	DATE
KOBE Board	Online Survey In-Person Working Group	March 7 - 8, 2022
KOBE Students	Virtual Survey Engagement	April 2022
KOBE Staff & Stakeholders	Virtual Survey Engagement	April 2022
Principals, Managers, Teachers	Strategic Planning Working Sessions	April 20 - 21, 2022
Fort Severn	Community/School Engagement Session	May 31 - June 1, 2022
Various KOBE	Kobe Summit Engagement Session	August 25, 2022
KOBE Board	In Person Working Group	October 6, 2022

In addition to the above schedule of outreach activities with key KOBE community stakeholders, the process also includes the creation of a board appointed steering committee. This committee was comprised of board members, staff, elders, and external consultants with expertise in strategy development. This group met throughout the planning process to ensure work was being done in a good way and that the voices of all KOBE communities and stakeholders were heard.

“KOBE’s purpose is to support schools and their teachers in education and resources of current practices in teaching, and the needs of Northern communities, their schools, and the students of these communities.”





STRATEGIC DIRECTION

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Our collective journey in gathering feedback regarding KOBE goals over the past year has led us to develop five main strategic directions.

Each of these strategic directions includes three main themes for fifteen strategic areas. We use the symbolism of the tipi as an example of the togetherness, strength, and alignment of all KOBE efforts. The poles hold the tipi together. With the strategic placement of the poles, the tipi would stay erected. At the center, we find the fire representing the heart of KOBE, the Mission and Vision. The tipi stands tall, and the entrance remains open to convey an invitation to all those involved in the education of the students today and generations to come.

The strategic directions are displayed below in a table format. Each section represents specific details for a strategic focus. The plan was designed as a living document so that it may grow and change with KOBE and its communities over the term of this strategic plan. The goals represented in each section set the final destination for each strategic direction, while the activities

represent the path to the goals. As with all journey's the path may change, but the destination remains the same. The goals and activities are meant to be fluid and may increase or change to better suit the needs of the plan, the communities, and the schools for which KOBE serves. It is important to note that administration, managers, and Directors must not see the goals and activities outlined below as prescriptive, rigid, and unbending.

Rather, they should be used as guidelines and open to interpretation and expansion when necessary. Each goal and activity should be monitored and reported per the term identified in the table. Short-term activities can be implemented immediately and reported on by the end of year two. Medium-term activities will be reported on in years three and four. Finally, the long-term initiatives will be reported at the end of the strategic plan term and may continue into the future.

TERM	TIMEFRAME	REPORTED TO THE BOARD
Short-term	Activities to be initiated within the first 2 years of the plan.	Progress to be reported to the board at the end of year 2.
Medium-term	Activities to be initiated by the 3 rd year of the plan.	Progress to be reported to the board at the end of year 4.
Long-term	Activities to be initiated by the 4 th year of the plan, and may span into the future beyond year 5.	Progress to be reported at the end of year 5. These goals may also be incorporated into the planning of the next strategic plan.



LANGUAGE & CULTURE

LAND-BASED LEARNING

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increase student participation in land-based learning activities	Engagement of Elders and or community members who are knowledge keepers to support the implementation of traditional land-based teachings while also honouring and sharing their language and knowledge.	SHORT
	Creation of a repository of traditional knowledge keepers in each school community to support seasonal land-based education such as hunting, fishing, preparing of traditional food, setting net, snaring, trapping, etc.	SHORT
	Ensure that students have regular access to land-based experiential programming within the schools that aligns with curriculum expectations across subject areas (daily, weekly, monthly, seasonally).	MEDIUM
Increase Educational Staff knowledge and experiences with land-based learning	Implement an annual Education Staff professional development initiative to support an appreciation and knowledge around First Nations land-based programming.	SHORT
	Support the participation of all school staff in community land-based activities.	SHORT

TRADITIONAL/CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased access to cultural experiences for staff and students.	Daily/morning cultural/spiritual practice to begin each day in a good way. Mino Bimadiziwin.	MEDIUM
	Each board meeting begins and ends in honouring cultural/spiritual practice.	SHORT
	Seek partnerships with other Indigenous organizations, including a calendar of active events which include cultural experiences.	MEDIUM
	Create opportunities for staff to engage and learn about traditional teachings and community protocols.	SHORT
	Use the Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to support learners.	SHORT



LANGUAGE & CULTURE

LANGUAGE(S)		
GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Enhanced access to language learning and acquisition.	Language courses offered for staff, students, and community members (ie. Mentor programs, Language Hubs - Kokums Kitchen).	MEDIUM
	Develop a funding strategy for authentic, experiential language programs (ie. Language Nests, Land Based Immersion Camps).	SHORT
	Create or purchase dialect-specific resources that can be used in classrooms to support the learning and acquisition of language.	SHORT
	Explore how language activities can be incorporated into and become part of the school and classroom experience on a daily basis (ie. language is visible throughout the entire school and classrooms).	SHORT
	Review and enhance the current language curriculum in schools to ensure that language is a key component of the learning environment (For non-Indigenous teachers, a language mentor would support the acquisition of the language).	SHORT
	Identify other First Nation language curriculum developed that could be adapted to meet the needs of language programs within KOBE schools. (ie. Maori, Mikmaw and Hawaii).	SHORT
	Expand the use of technology in the delivery of language programs	MEDIUM

IDENTITY



ADVOCACY / VOICE

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased marketing, promotion and community awareness of KOBE	Continued community updates and community visits to ensure everyone (parents, board members, new staff, etc.) are familiar with the communication tools used by KOBE.	MEDIUM
	In community communication of the purpose of the board through a newly developed communications plan.	SHORT
	Implement a KOBE brand strategy.	SHORT

PARTNERSHIP / ALIGNMENT

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Foster strong, active, and reciprocal partnerships with other Indigenous service organizations.	Establish partnerships and ensure regular contact with organizations that will assist staff and students with mental health supports.	MEDIUM
	Develop repository of existing partners for community distribution.	SHORT
Coordinate a KOBE-wide partnership initiative, targeting private industry based on community needs and the ability to deliver on potential partnership agreements	Identify all existing and past private sector partnerships for the creation of a KOBE-wide partnership development initiative.	MEDIUM
	Establish long-term strategic partnerships and relationships that expand academic and training program opportunities.	LONG

FUNDING

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increase the overall stability of financials for the KOBE board	Diversify and expand non-government revenue sources.	LONG
	Dedicated capacity for funding proposal development and advocacy.	MEDIUM
	Develop a repository of active funders to support KOBE programs and initiative.	MEDIUM
	Research and identify other potential sources of funding, including Trust Funds, charities, etc. that are willing to assist educational initiatives	MEDIUM

PROGRAMS



RESOURCES

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Expand research and evaluation capacity to support Indigenous learning and programming.	Establish assessment strategies (tools) that KOBE schools will use in order to support programming (ie. Literacy and Numeracy).	SHORT

BENCHMARKING

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Programs are well-structured with clear goals, performance measures, and accountability.	Each program sets clear performance (and benchmarking where possible) metrics and reports annually to the Board.	
	Develop and implement school improvement plans for each KOBE school to identify the academic and priority goals along with strategies in order to support schools as required.	SHORT
Identify specific training needs and skill gaps in schools that require focus.	Create a Principal/Teacher performance appraisal to determine medium and long-term needs and requirements for schools and staff and support professional growth opportunities.	MEDIUM

FEEDBACK

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Collect regular feedback from KOBE community parents and students.	Clients are asked to provide feedback (formally or informally) at each visit to the Centre.	SHORT
Use feedback to improve programs and services.	Feedback is consolidated and actioned. Regular reporting to Board.	SHORT

PEOPLE



COMMUNICATION

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased two-way communication between KOBE and its staff, schools, students, and communities.	Quarterly newsletter to partners, parents, communities, and staff.	MEDIUM
	Develop an internal communications plan, which includes a calendar of events.	SHORT

COOPERATION

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased Elder, Knowledge Keeper and community member involvement in school, land-based and language activities.	Create opportunities for staff to engage in programs outside of their own departments.	SHORT
Increased focus on sharing and support between staff members and departments.	ED to host a monthly gathering of all employees, with one program featured per gathering.	SHORT

SUPPORTS

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Develop/improve leadership competencies.	Create a KOBE Teacher Network to encourage mentorship, support and the exchange of knowledge, successful classroom practices, and share up-to-date educational research practices.	MEDIUM
	Provide professional development opportunities for principals, teachers, teaching assistants, educational assistants and other educational support personnel working in KOBE community schools.	SHORT
	Enhance and expand cultural sensitivity and cultural competency workshops and training.	MEDIUM
	Create a KOBE induction program, providing extra supports to the Principals and teachers new to KOBE schools.	MEDIUM
	Increase networking opportunities between community schools (i.e. Professional Learning Community Meetings - ie. Division - P/J, J/I).	SHORT
Develop a teacher training and recruitment strategy/ plan specifically for KOBE community members.	Identify/determine the types of partnerships that will benefit KOBE schools as well existing or potentially beneficial educational programs (BEd program through Lakehead University or Oshki & EA programming through Nipissing)	LONG

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



GATHERINGS & CELEBRATIONS

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased attendance at KOBE related events in community.	Develop a community calendar outlining all public gathering events for each school and community.	MEDIUM

PARENTAL/STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased community awareness of KOBE	Communicate the purpose of the board through a newly developed communications plan.	MEDIUM
Increased student attendance.	Involve parents in reviewing the attendance policy.	SHORT
	Explore and identify successful attendance strategies that presently exist within KOBE schools and in other First Nation schools. Share and replicate successful strategies.	SHORT
	Explore and develop the performance measures required to track, evaluate and set benchmarks in the area of student attendance.	SHORT
	Explore a variety of options on how best to ensure students attend school.	MEDIUM
	Develop and implement attendance pilot projects based on completed research.	MEDIUM
	Develop tools for parents and guardians to engage with school and students.	LONG
Creation of local parental involvement committees comprised of parents, caregivers, education staff, school administration, Elders, community health representatives.	Creation of a Terms of Reference for the parental involvement committee for each community.	SHORT
	Identify plans, goals and benchmarks for the parental involvement committee in each community.	SHORT
	Initiate research in each community to understand why there is lack of parental involvement to support KOBE learners (i.e. home visits to determine the issue and barriers that exist in order to begin work on potential solutions).	SHORT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



SAFE SPACE

GOAL	ACTIVITIES	TERM
Increased support for student mental wellness	Update and develop new mental health resources and procedures for each KOBE schools and their communities.	LONG
	Update and develop new mental health resources for KiHS and KOSSS.	MEDIUM
	Ensure that all staff training are provided training in Mental Health First Aid and ASSIST.	SHORT
	Provide access to "wrap around" and support services for students.	MEDIUM

