

**COMMUNITY PARTNER DESCRIPTION:**

Eskasoni Immersion school is a Kindergarten to grade 4 Mi'kmaw immersion school located in Eskasoni, Uni'ma'ki.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

This study aims to explore the impacts of land-based learning on students' oral language production and comprehension competencies by implementing an outdoor learning space that includes outdoor seating and a fire pit. The outdoor learning space aligns with the interconnectedness of language and cultural practices related to survival, including cooking, cleaning, and ceremony. Students will use the Mi'kmaw language when learning to make handmade spears and/or handmade fishing rods to catch smelts, a skill that is taught with their teacher around the fire pit while engaging in stories/oral history. Students can then learn to traditionally cook smelts, Bannock (luskinikin), and berries for teas and jams around the fire. Students learning hygiene practices and the related language can use the outdoor learning space for boiling clean water and developing their understanding of traditional hygiene practices.

**PROJECTED BENEFITS:**

This exploratory study will inform the development of a sustainable land-based program at Eskasoni Immersion School. Further, developing a sustainable land-based program supports students' connection to the land and the languages that the land sustains. Snowshoe et al. (2015) state that culturally specific indicators of resilience have been observed in Indigenous children who are connected to their ancestral language, spirituality, and culture through land-based learning opportunities. Outdoor classroom spaces have been shown to increase community involvement and connection, inform healthy living choices, promote environmental sustainability, and support school cultural programming (Baker & Germain, 2020; Kiewra & Veselack, 2016; Lowan, 2009; McCarty, Lee, Noguera, Yepa & Nicholas, 2022; Moquino & Kitchens, 2021; Simpson, 2016).