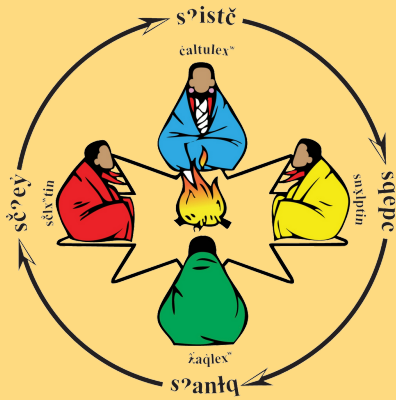




Artwork by Alishon Kelly



Axlasqt - Daily Pledge

Axlasqt m še Séliš nuwewłstn łu qe qš yo?numm.
Every day Salish language is what we learn.

Imše qe olq'štwexw.
We will help each other.

Ta qe qes č?oyncutmstm łu qe snk'wsqelixw.
We will not laugh at our Indian people.

Imše qe put?entm esya? łu ul sxw'mi'ne'y?em.
We will respect all teachers.

Imše qe q'weyl'mist.
We will do our best.

Ta pisterm qe qš čmšqnmist!
We will never give up!

Qe es Lemti
"We are thankful"

When people come together, amazing feats can be achieved. Nkwusm's 20 year milestone is a testament to that. We are grateful for our supporters and contributors. Our school is a 501 c3 non-profit and we rely on the generosity of our donors to keep our classrooms going.
Lemltš! (Thank You!)



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Nkwusm
Salish Language School

Keeping the  *fire alive!*

This pledge was created by Sophie Mays while working at Nkwusm. She wanted her students to understand the importance of the Salish Language while at the same time understanding the importance of humility and respect.



Supi Mays Stijn Smallsalmon Patlik Pierre Gene Beaverhead

Qe Pipx^wot

"Our Elders"

We are eternally grateful to our elders for ensuring the survival of our language and culture today. Since Nk^wusm's founding, Séliš & Qlispé elders have played a critical role in sharing their knowledge and working directly with students to provide a rare opportunity to learn in an immersion setting where students are exposed to the Séliš and Qlispé language and culture on a daily basis.

"Ta pistem qe qs čmšqnmist."
(We will never give up)
Sophie "Supi" Mays

Nk^wusm means family. The literal translation describes "one fire" shared amongst the collective. Nk^wusm has worked to start a fire for learning the Séliš & Qlispé language through trial, error, and success. Our goal is to share our flame and the gift of what we've learned over the past 21 years with others who would like to start a language revitalization program or school.

Inspired by the generosity of our elders, our staff and Board of Directors are working together to develop a systemic process whereby Indigenous languages can be passed to future generations. Through adult and child learning programs, the guidance of elders, and developing learning materials, we have hope that this nation's Indigenous languages can and will be revitalized.



Qe Smimi?

"Our Story"

Indigenous languages and cultures were targeted by the US Government and from 1869 to the 1960's Federal policy forced Indigenous children into government funded boarding schools. The intent was to assimilate them into western culture through abusive and even fatal means. A traumatic impact of the "boarding school era" is reflected in the critical decline of speakers of Indigenous languages.

In 2002, four Séliš and Qlispé people founded Nk^wusm to ensure that the language would survive. The goal was to create a dynamic learning environment for the Séliš and Qlispé language and culture.

The mission of Nk^wusm is to recreate a process whereby the Salish Language is passed from parents to children, elder to youth in an effort to holistically preserve the language, perpetuating the Salish way of life and worldview.

tu Nk^wusms schtelsm qs k^wult t lq^wax še Séliš u Qlispé nuwewlšt n t p^wx^wot č scmelt, p^wx^wot č sk^wwimlt qs šiyust qs axlmist esya? qs čšti?im sqelix^w nuwewlšt n. İci? qs x^wlxwilt n Séliš u Qlispé scx^wlxwits u qe scmipnunm.

"The language will be the salvation of our people."
Patlik Pierre

Nk^wusm began as a single pre-K classroom and has evolved into a pre-K through 8th grade school. 70 percent of the school's curriculum is based in tradition, culture, and preserving the Séliš and Qlispé worldview through language. 30 percent focuses on math and English.

The school operates under an inclusive decision making model where staff committees make recommendations to the 3-5 member Board of Directors.



Sx^wlek^ws Bell

Sx^wlek^ws attended Nk^wusm from pre-K to 8th grade. In 2022, he graduated from Two Eagle River School.

"Nk^wusm teaches students how to be a strong Indigenous individual in today's colonized world. Nk^wusm gave me a spark in my heart to want to do great things for my people. Without all of the love and support from everyone at Nk^wusm, graduating wouldn't have been possible."



Qe Smiméyei

"Our Students"

Language is the fire that keeps us alive and Nk^wusm encourages everyone to learn. Nk^wusm serves 36 students ages three to 14 years old. The school has graduated 19 eighth graders. Nk^wusm aims to nurture our students' identities and restore the communal connection to our ancestors, land, and way of life.

"The language is a gift. You should do everything you can to hold on to it."
Gene "Nčesl" Beverhead

Nicole Perry

Nicole attended Nk^wusm from pre-K to 8th grade. She was amongst the first graduating class of the Salish Language Educator Development Program at Salish Kootenai College. Today, she is the lead teacher in Nk^wusm's pre-school classroom.

"Nk^wusm has been shaping my path since the moment I started. Little did I know my time at Nk^wusm as a student would come full circle and now I'm working as a teacher. I fully believe this is the path my elders and teachers saw for me and that's why I'm here today."

