

WELCOME TO

# Cat Lake First Nation



**TEACH  
FOR  
CANADA**



booshoo



# Cat Lake First Nation

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to Cat Lake First Nation! We are very happy that you have decided to come and teach in our community.

Cat Lake is a proud Ojibway community, located, as you might have guessed from the name, on the edge of a lake. The land around us is beautiful. You will have the opportunity to explore its beauty during your time with us, both during school hours and in your free time.

We are very proud of our new school. Since its opening, students have come back and shown a renewed interest for their education. We hope you will fuel this interest by teaching dynamic classes and also investing yourself outside of classes, organising extracurricular activities that will bring students to discover new interests and talents.

We hope you will settle in well to the community. Take the time to get to know people inside and outside of the school, and you will start to feel at home. If you have any problems, please speak to your principal, who will help you try to resolve these issues. We ask that you not go to the band council with your problems, but rather follow the correct protocol by talking to the education leadership.

Your students, colleagues, and neighbours look forward to meeting you and getting to know you!

**Marie Stewart**

Education Director  
Cat Lake First Nation



# Community



## A Brief History

- **1788** The First Nation calls itself Bizhiw-zaaga'iganiwininiwag meaning "Men of Wild-cat Lake" or as Bizhiw-zaaga'iganiing Nitam Anishinaabeg meaning "The First Nation at Wild-cat Lake," where wild-cat refers to the Canada lynx.
- **1788** Cat Lake was originally established as a Hudson's Bay Company trading post, and later belonged to the Osnaburgh Band of Ojibway.
- **1970** The reserve was formally established on June 22.
- **1977** First school built
- **2003** The First Nation was originally 218 hectares but it increased to 1771 hectares in 2003 under the Government of Canada's Addition to Reserve Policy.
- **2006** The school building is lost in a fire.
- **2013** A new school building is built.
- **2014** New housing and teacherages built adjacent to the school
- **2018** KiHS addition for grade 9

# The Land



Cat Lake First Nation is situated approximately 179 kilometers due north of Sioux Lookout in Northwestern Ontario. The Cat Lake Reserve is situated on the north shores of the Cat Lake river system. The community is located on the southeast corner of the Reserve.

Moose, caribou, beaver, muskrat, bears, geese and ducks are common in the area.

## Cat Lake Community Map





# Lawrence Wesley Education Centre

## Welcome!

**School Population**  
100

**Grades**  
Kindergarten to  
Grade 8  
Grade 9 (KiHS)

**Principal**  
Ruby  
Keesickquayash

**Education Director**  
Marie Stewart

Lawrence Wesley Education Centre is named after the school custodian who worked at the previous school for 30 years.

### What is the school most proud of...

- We are very proud of our brand new school. When it opened students started coming back to school because they wanted to be in the new building.

### Unique Classes Offered

- Outdoor cultural activities such as nature walks, snowshoeing, and ice fishing
- A year end camp out for primary grade students.

### Extracurricular Activities

Current sports activities include hockey, skating and volleyball. There is a tech club that runs on Tuesdays, broomball that runs twice a week during the fall and winter, and there are youth nights for the boys on Wednesday nights and the girls on Friday nights.

### Special Events

- Christmas concert
- Culture week in fall: school is open during the moose derby but at the end of the week the kids join the adults in the hunting camps.





# A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Teachers are expected to be at the school by 8:30 am and stay until at least 4:30 pm. Breakfast is served at the school on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and lunch is served on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students and teachers go home for the lunch break. Recess break times are up to each individual teacher, and they and their teaching assistant are responsible for supervision. Every teacher has a 45 minute preparation period.

Teachers are expected to do yard duty at least once a week. Teachers are also expected to help out with extracurricular activities.

Each classroom has a teaching assistant to help with classroom management, student support and cultural activities.

There is usually a staff meeting every few weeks to discuss school events and any important issues that may arise.

| Sample Elementary Timetable |                 |                   |                 |                   |       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------|
|                             | Monday          | Tuesday           | Wednesday       | Thursday          |       |
| 9:00                        | Language Arts   | Language Arts     | Language Arts   | Language Arts     |       |
| 9:15                        | Breakfast       |                   | Breakfast       |                   |       |
| 9:45                        | Language Arts   |                   | Language Arts   |                   |       |
| 10:15                       | Recess          | Recess            | Recess          | Recess            |       |
| 10:30                       | Math            | Math              | Math            | Math              |       |
| 11:15                       | Native Language | Native Language   | Native Language | Native Language   |       |
| 11:45                       |                 | Lunch             |                 | Lunch             | Lunch |
| 12:00                       | Lunch           |                   |                 |                   |       |
| 1:00                        | Language Arts   | Language Arts     | Language Arts   | Language Arts     |       |
| 1:30                        | Science         | History/Geography | Science         | History/Geography |       |
| 2:00                        | Recess          | Recess            | Recess          | Recess            |       |
| 2:15                        | Art/Music/Drama | History/Geography | Science         | Art/Music/Drama   |       |
| 3:00                        | Phys. Ed.       | Phys. Ed.         | Health          | Phys. Ed.         |       |
| 4:00                        | Dismissal       | Dismissal         | Dismissal       | Dismissal         |       |





## Facilities

The school has capacity for over 150 students, and was built west of the developed portion of the community, on undeveloped land.

The school design was inspired by the pristine spruce and poplar boreal forest that characterizes Cat Lake First Nation. The entrance provides a broad sweeping view of the undisturbed forest, and the colours of the boreal forest throughout the seasons are used in a playful and cheerful manner inside, while the blue colours used on the exterior of the building reflect the sky and traditional school colours.

The school promotes the culture, language and values of the community. Classrooms are clustered around a high level clerestory window providing natural light, a focus and a sense of community for students. The gymnasium and media centre, incorporating the library and computer room, are separate from classrooms to allow for after-hours access and promote greater use of the facility.

*Source: Architecture49*

The school facilities include a library/resource centre, kitchen, gym and 6 classrooms. The front foyer also serves as the cafeteria. There is a playground and baseball diamond outside. There is a separate playground for Kindergarten students.







# Teacherages

The teacherages are located right next to the school, which was built in a new sub-division.

Some of the teacherages are brand new, all of them are well maintained and in good condition. They are mostly single units but some are larger homes that can accommodate a family. Teacherages are fully furnished, including all major appliances (fridge, stove, freezer, washer, dryer, dishwasher). Teachers only need to bring towels, linens, and pillows. Rent is \$400 or \$250 a month for shared accommodation and includes utilities. Pets are allowed so long as teachers clean up after them. You can get to the Northern Store after school by asking the school van driver to take you or make the 1 hour and 30-minute walk there and back.





# Life in the Community

## **Traditions and Customs**

Cat Lake is a Christian anchored community. There is a Pentecostal Church, where there is a service every Sunday. There is also an Anglican Church, though it does not have a pastor and it is only open for funerals.

## **Community Events and Activities**

- Feasts are regularly organised in the community. Teachers are welcome to attend.
- Teachers often help out when there is a tragedy in the community, e.g. a wake. Teachers usually help with the cooking and hosting.
- There is a Spring Break and a Traditional Week each year. Teachers normally don't participate in these events.
- Some years there are activities to celebrate Treaty Days.
- Bingo games are called through the local radio station.

## **Hockey Arena**

There are two outdoor hockey arenas in the community. The arena near the school is well-lit for evening games or skating.

## **Services**

- The Northern Store is the main store and there are a few small privately-run businesses.
- Food can be ordered and shipped from Fresh Market Foods in Sioux Lookout. Personal groceries are usually brought to the school by community members or staff members if you know they are being delivered.
- Other services include the Cat Lake Lodge, Canada Post, an ATM, and a local radio station.



# Get to Know Cat Lake Community Members

**MEET RACHEL WESLEY,**  
Former Windigo Tribal Partnership Liaison

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**What do you like to do in the community when you have a day off?**

Fishing! It's peaceful and it's away from technology. I enjoy swimming in both in summer and winter. The main difference it it's colder and there is less fish in the winter and there are more in the summer. Then I get to eat the fish. I like to eat walleye.

**How would you describe your community to someone who has never been?**

It is quiet, secluded, it can be dusty sometimes (in spring and summer). It's peaceful.



**MEET MARIE STEWART,**  
Education Director

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**What do you like most about your community?**

I like the beauty of being so close to nature, especially at the school. You can walk out and be in the forest in minutes. Everything about nature gives a sense of calmness to your thoughts.

**What do you like to do in the community when you have a day off?**

Usually I'll stay home and relax by not answering the phone. I like to go out for a walk.

**How would you describe your community to someone who had never been?**

My community is surrounded by nature and is a very peaceful area. The reserve is on the north shores of the community.







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# Around the Community



①

Hockey at sunset

②

Mocassins

③

Northern Lights

④

View over Cat Lake

⑤

Grocery Delivery

⑥

Ice fishing

⑦

Preparing a goose

⑧

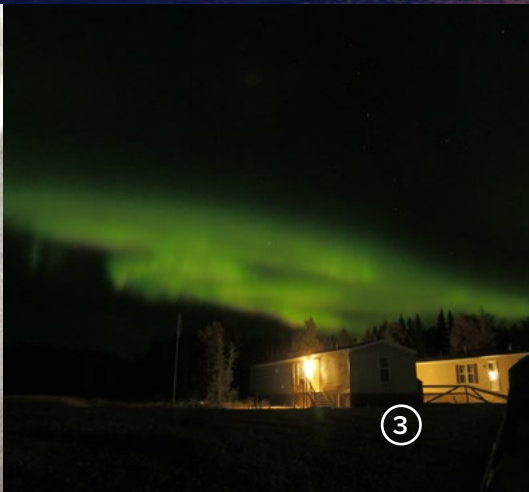
Kids on the lake

⑨

Aerial view of Cat Lake



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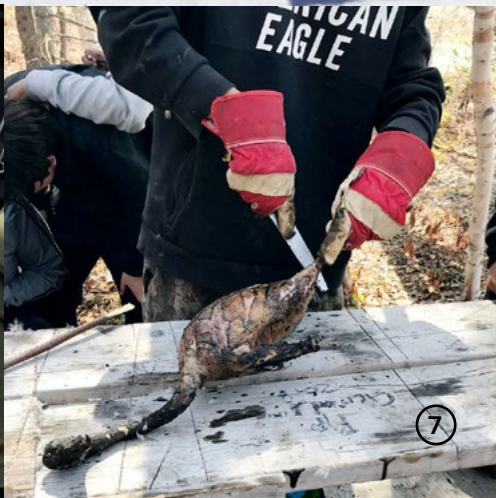


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# Quick Facts

**Community Name**  
Cat Lake First Nation

**Tribal Council**  
Windigo First Nations Council

**Provincial Territorial Organization (PTO)**  
Nishnawbe-Aski Nation



Population On-Reserve

**720**



Language Spoken

**Ojibway  
and English**



Treaty

**Treaty 9**



Average Yearly Temperature

**-20.7°C    17.5°C**  
January                      July



Access

**Year-round**



**Jan - Mar**





### Getting to and from Cat Lake

- The nearest urban centre is Pickle Lake, 115 km south-east of Cat Lake; the winter road runs north from Pickle Lake and takes approximately 4-5 hours to drive to Cat Lake.
- Slate Falls Airways flies daily on regular schedules to and from Sioux Lookout. The flight lasts approximately 45 minutes to an hour.
- North Star also flies to Cat Lake from Thunder Bay. The flight lasts approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

Cat Lake is a dry community. No drugs or alcohol are allowed in the community. All luggage is searched upon arrival in the First Nation.

## Cat Lake Directory

**Band Office**  
807-347-2100

**Cat Lake Airport**  
807-347-2066

**Marie Stewart**  
**Education Director**  
807-347-2491 or  
807-738-3880 (cell)

**Ruby Keesickquayash**  
**Principal**  
**Lawrence Wesley Education Centre**  
807-347-2491

**Nursing Station**  
807-347-2110

**Nishnawbe-Aski Police**  
807-347-2099

**Cat Lake First Nation**  
PO Box 81  
Cat Lake, ON P0V 1J0



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