

WELCOME TO

Sandy Lake First Nation



**TEACH
FOR
CANADA**

The background of the page is a photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the right side, partially obscured by clouds, with its light reflecting on the water's surface. In the foreground, a fishing rod with a wooden handle and a reel is visible, angled from the bottom left towards the center. The water is calm with some ripples. In the distance, a dark silhouette of a forested shoreline is visible. Overlaid on the entire image is a large, stylized, light-colored graphic of a fish, possibly a salmon, facing right. The fish's body is composed of several curved, overlapping shapes that follow its general form.

wacheyah



Sandy Lake First Nation

Dear Teachers,

Sandy Lake enthusiastically welcomes you to our community! You will soon be moving to a large and vibrant community located near the Manitoba border. No doubt you will learn a tremendous amount during your time here about the Oji-Cree people and life in the north, while discovering a beautiful region. Our community shares very close ties with nearby Deer Lake, North Spirit Lake, Keewaywin and Koocheching. I encourage you to learn about the history of how our community came to be established as it is today.

Sandy Lake Board of Education has given itself the mission to partner with parents and guardians to ensure that all students are provided with a high quality education which empowers them to be self-sufficient, life-long learners and responsible community and family members. Students are taught to respect, practice and take pride in our Anishinabek cultural, spiritual and linguistic values as given to us by the Creator.

As you settle into your new life, I invite you to engage with your colleagues, your students, their parents, elders, and other residents of Sandy Lake. They will be curious to get to know you and will be very open to helping you adjust to life and work in Sandy Lake.

We have two schools in Sandy Lake, where we ensure that students learn both the Ontario curriculum as well as their own culture and language. We also offer several extracurricular activities. Helping out with these activities is a great way to get to know the students outside of class.

I encourage you to also take a very active role in the community. You will discover a wide range of activities and events that take place throughout the year, which will give you the opportunity to get to know members of Sandy Lake beyond the school community. You are always welcome to take part in these events, all you need to do is show up! A lending hand will also always be appreciated.

We read your profiles carefully when we decided to offer you a position in one of our schools. Now we very much look forward to meeting you in person and getting to know you!

Sincerely,

Victor Rae

Director of Education,
Sandy Lake Board of Education



A Brief History of Sandy Lake

The area known as Sandy Lake and the vast expanse of lakes and forests to the east, south, west, and north is the traditional territory of the Anishinabeck, the Oji-Cree.

As late as 1897, Big Sandy Lake was considered “as inaccessible as the North Pole”. It was an area distant from the main trade routes. The closest Hudson Bay posts were located at Island Lake to the west and at Big Trout Lake to the east. Yet, as “inaccessible” as this area was, the ancestors of the Sandy Lake people travelled the lakes, rivers, and portage systems along the Severn River from Lake Winnipeg, Berens River, and Island Manitoba to Fort Severn, Ontario.

The earliest person recorded is Porcupine Standing Sideways. This was before 1823. His ancestors or other people of that generation are not recorded in the fur trade journals. The other person recorded was a hunter by the name of Shell (see *Killing The Shaman*, a book by Thomas Fiddler and Jim Stevens).

The people at the time of Porcupine lived in small family groups and engaged in traditional pursuits of hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering. Traditionally, theirs was a nomadic lifestyle following the movements of the animals and the seasons. The elders speak of good times and bad times. The environment can be a blessing or a challenge. There were times when the animals and berries were plenty providing sustenance for all. Other times, there was

famine sometimes resulting in starvation for some.

The people were a spiritual people with a strong belief in the Creator. They believed that the land was a gift from the Creator given to them for their survival. They were the keepers of the land and they believed they were put on this land for that purpose. The culture and traditions, a way of life, and nature’s laws was based on this sacred relationship with the land. And they governed themselves accordingly on how life should be conducted.

Porcupine Standing Sideways, the leader of the Sucker clan, had three daughters and three sons. The sons were Jack Fiddler, Peter Flett, and Joseph Fiddler. It is at this time the picture of who’s who becomes a little clearer when the ancestors of the other clans emerged through stories of the elders. There were the five clans of the Sandy Lake area, Sucker (Fiddler, Goodman, and Harper), Pelican (Meekis), Crane (Kakegamic and Kakepetum), Sturgeon (Mamakeesic), and Caribou (Linklater and Rae). There are stories of when life was good, hardships, the beautiful and harsh environment, contact with the outside world, and other pieces of history and origins of where we come from. These can be found in the book *Killing the Shaman*.



Porcupine died when he was 120 years old. In the last decades of the 1800's, the leading man of the Sucker clan was his son Jack Fiddler, or 'South Wind'. Jack Fiddler was a great medicine man, conjurer and healer of the people. It is known he visited the May-May-quay-shi-wok in the rock cliffs. He cured the whitefish in South Trout of worms and once he brought back the sturgeon to Cobham Falls. The leading man of the Cranes was Papmekeesikquap at this time. The lives of Porcupine's three sons ended in tragedy. When Jack Fiddler died in 1907 his son Robert Fiddler became leader of the Sucker clan.

– Sandy Lake First Nation website:
<http://sandylake.firstnation.ca/?q=history>

Killing the Shaman can be purchased from Penumbra Press:
<https://www.penumbraPress.com/book.php?id=88>



Community



A Brief History

- 1909** People from the Sandy Lake area are present at a treaty signing at Island Lake. A few people attend but most decline to take part in the treaty signing and request to have their own band.
- 1910** Chief Robert Fiddler, leader of the Sucker Clan, signs the Treaty and the Crown formally recognizes Deer Lake Band. The Deer Lake Band is comprised of members from at least five different clans: the Sucker, Pelican, Crane, Sturgeon and Caribou clans.
- Late 1920** Many members of the Deer Lake Band move to the area that is now known as Sandy Lake.
- 1938** A reserve for Deer Lake Band is surveyed at Sandy Lake.
- 1945** Deer Lake Band receives approval by Order-In-Council for reserve land at Sandy Lake. Though the treaty was signed at the present location of Deer Lake, the reserve that was promised was granted at Sandy Lake.
- 1977** Sandy Lake, Deer Lake, and North Spirit Lake divide into three separate Bands. Prior to this, they were all considered to be part of the Deer Lake Band.
- 1985** Deer Lake Band and North Spirit Lake Band both receive approval for reserve land. Families from Sandy Lake relocate and are recognized as Keewaywin Band. They settle at Keewaywin and Couchiching.
- 1991** Keewaywin is granted approval for reserve land.
- 2010** The community organises a series of events and activities to commemorate 100 years since the adhesion to Treaty No. 5. An official Treaty 5 painting is created by Sandy Lake artists Bart Meekis and Robert Kakegamic. The original treaty document is displayed in the community.



The Land

Sandy Lake is located at the tail end of the Severn River, flowing to Hudson's Bay.

The community is located in North-West Ontario, near the Ontario-Manitoba border. The closest town is Red Lake, accessible by winter road.

The people of Sandy Lake still practice the traditional ways of fishing hunting and trapping. Traditional family traplines are utilized in all seasons. Moose, rabbit, beaver and duck are common hunts throughout the year. Walleye is the most commonly caught fish for food but sturgeon, whitefish, goldeye, and jackfish are also eaten.

When flying to Sandy Lake, you can tell you are approaching the community because the water below is brown. The community has a music festival to celebrate this called the "Muddy Water Festival".

Sandy Lake Community Map



Thomas Fiddler Memorial

Elementary School



School Mandate

School Population

600

Grades

Kindergarten - Grade 10

Secretary

Tina Kakepetum

Secretary

Anne Meekis

The Sandy Lake Board of Education believes that partnerships between educators and parents/guardians make education and learning more relevant and effective. It is critical for educators and parents to be in constant communication so that they can collaborate to develop students' love for learning.

The Sandy Lake Board of Education seeks to offer to students' an education that enhances their appreciation and understanding of our local culture and linguistic heritage.

The Elementary and High schools were named in honour of Chief Thomas Fiddler, who was the last hereditary chief of Sandy Lake.





and High School

A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Each teacher will receive an individual schedule and list of duties during the orientation at the beginning of the school year.

Teachers are expected to be in by 8:30 and finish their day after 4:15. Morning recess lasts 15 minutes. Students are let out at staggered times running from 10am to 10:35. Lunch break is from 12-1pm. The school offers a nutrition program for students that is also open to members of the community. Teachers will be assigned recess and lunch duties. Teachers have preparation time during physical education and native language classes.

What is the school most proud of...

When former Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo visited Sandy Lake he noted the innovative approaches adopted by education leaders in the community to adapt to changes and ensure that students' needs were met. Chief Atleo said that Sandy Lake was a model of First Nation Education and should be a source of inspiration for other communities.





Facilities and Services

School Events

- Field Day/Winter Games
- Luv2Groove Dance program
- Christmas Concert
- Cultural week

School Facilities

Thomas Fiddler Memorial Elementary School has 23 classrooms, including a home economics class, a gym, and computer lab. Thomas Fiddler Memorial High School has 11 classrooms, including a tech shop, a computer lab, a science lab, a home economics class, and a gym.

Classes

The Elementary School offers a Native language immersion program until Grade 4. Computer classes, Physical Education and Native language classes are offered to all students.

The High School offers Tech, Computers, Physical Education, and Native language classes for all Grade 7 and 8 students. The Grade 9 and 10 courses are approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education and include Tech, Computers, Food and Nutrition, Physical Education, Science, Geography, History, Mathematics, Native Language, Art, English and more.

Extracurricular activities

The elementary and high schools share a Culture program that plans monthly activities. All students have the opportunity to participate and engage in local cultural activities. Students can also participate in morning sports and Right to Play activities after school.



Teacherages

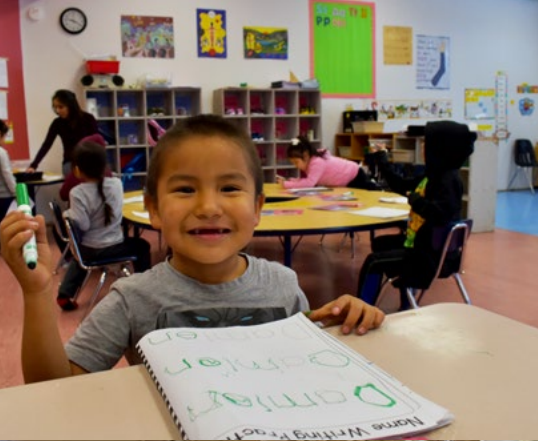
Sandy Lake's teacherages are duplexes ranging from 2 to 4 bedrooms in size. Most teachers will have roommates with whom they will share common spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and laundry facilities.

Elementary school teachers' teacherages are located approximately 2 kilometers from the school. The distance is walkable. Alternatively teachers can get picked up and dropped off by the school bus or a member of the community will give them a ride. High school teachers' teacherages are located a short walk from school.

Teachers are not allowed to have pets in the teacherages. The band office helps with internet access. Cable television is not provided. Tbaytel offers cell phone service in the area.

Should there be any issue with the teacherage, teachers should speak to the Board of Education or their Principal. They will make sure to contact the right person at Chief and Council.





Life in the Community



Regular Activities in the Community

- Right to Play
- Brighter Futures
- Hockey/Broomball: there is an arena, which is open everyday
- Weekly cooking classes
- Weekly community fitness class

Annual Events

- Halloween Bash

- Office Cup – Baseball/Broomball
- Lil' Bands Hockey Tournament
- Blueberry Festival
- Christmas Parade
- Treaty Days
- End of September: everyone goes hunting, teachers are welcome.

Traditions and Customs

The people of Sandy Lake believe that it is important to share and show thanks and respect to the Creator and to each other.

This is commonly done through the preparation and sharing of meals, called feasts.

Feasts celebrate significant occasions including seasons, memorials, birthdays, holidays, births, first hunts, or to celebrate each other. Usually there is more than one "sitting" at a feast. Everyone is welcome! Big feasts are usually announced over the radio. During the first sitting, a prayer is said by an elder, including words or thanks



and prayers for the future.

Churches

There are 6 churches in the community: United, Roman Catholic, Mennonite, Pentecostal, Revival, and Full Gospel. Non-community members are welcome to attend all of the churches; they have an open door policy. There are services every week.

Two airlines fly to Sandy Lake

- Wasaya flies to Sioux Lookout

everyday. Flights can be chartered but it is very expensive.

- Perimeter flies to Winnipeg. There are no flights on Saturdays.
- Winter roads connect Sandy Lake to Deer Lake and North Spirit Lake.

Shipments to Sandy Lake

Packages come and are delivered by Wasaya. They can be sent to the Sandy Lake Board of Education, box 8. Fresh food deliveries arrive on Wednesdays (depending on weather).

It is also possible to ship orders from Winnipeg with Perimeter Aviation.

What's going on in Sandy Lake?

A few good sources for events, activities, and other information:

- Sandy Lake buy and sell Facebook group
- Radio station: James Fiddler Memorial Sandy Lake
- Northern store bulletin board

Get to Know Sandy Lake Community Members

MEET DARLENE KAKEPETUM,
Education Coordinator, Sandy Lake Board of Education

What do you like most about your community?

People are very caring in Sandy Lake. The community works together, particularly when they need to get things going. For example, people work together for Earth Day, and they clean-up the community. People are also very welcoming to everyone. There is also a lot to do in Sandy Lake. There's fishing, hunting, camping, boating, ice fishing, and there are walking trails. There are also many activities organised for the youth in the community, including hockey, volleyball and several other sports.



MEET LISA RAE,
Treasurer, Sandy Lake Board of Education

What do you do when you have spare time?

I stay at home with family. I have six kids. So, I enjoy family time. We do stuff together such as sledding and going for walks. The kids are 17, 12, 10, 8, 5, and 4. I like to go outdoors, and I like being active. My 10-year old daughter likes drawing, and my 7 year old likes hanging out with friends and storytelling. I wish there were more traditional activities available for youth, such as woodcutting, snaring, woodworking. More dancing, music, and arts. Not all kids are into sports.

How would you describe Sandy Lake First Nation?

It is big, clean, and has friendly people. Downtown has everything you need, like the Northern Store. We also have boardwalks that go along the lake where you can take walks. You can enjoy the beauty of environment, and Sandy Lake also has all the amenities you need.



**MEET SONNY MANOAKEESICK,
Member, Sandy Lake Board of Education**

What do you like most about your community?

That we are a vibrant, proactive and forward-thinking First Nation where ideas are accepted and change happens. There have been a few books published on the history of Sandy Lake First Nation. These have aided in allowing us to understand our cultural identity.

How would you describe Sandy Lake First Nation?

It is a vibrant community. We are always looking to update technology. We have high speed internet and good cell service which we are continuously updating. We engage with outside activities, for example with the government. We have a student success program and also a School Improvement Committee. Our teachers engage with the community in school.



**MEET LEVIUS FIDDLER,
Chairman, Sandy Lake Board of Education**

What do you do when you have spare time?

I like to spend time with my grandkids, relatives, and cousins. We will spend time outside together, for example raking leaves. We also chop wood and pile it up. My 4 year old grandkid wants to be doing whatever I am doing, he wants to learn. And I too I want them to learn from me, the way I learned from my grandparents.

How would you describe Sandy Lake First Nation?

Sandy Lake is very unique. There are five neighbourhoods. There used to be four, but new area created in the 1960s when an airport was built. There are Board Members to represent each region. There are different clans and families in each of these areas and language is even different between them. We are able to understand each other even though we may have different words for the same thing. It is very different from a town or city. There are no buses or taxi. You need a car or a boat to get around because it is quite big. Or you need friends with cars. We try to make the schools safe for everyone and recently rekeyed both schools.



Around the Community



①

Ice fishing

②

Cross country skiing in Sandy Lake

③

Donated hockey equipment

④

Path from some of the teacherages to school

⑤

School teepee

⑥

Students learn how to rabbit snare in Outdoor Education

⑦

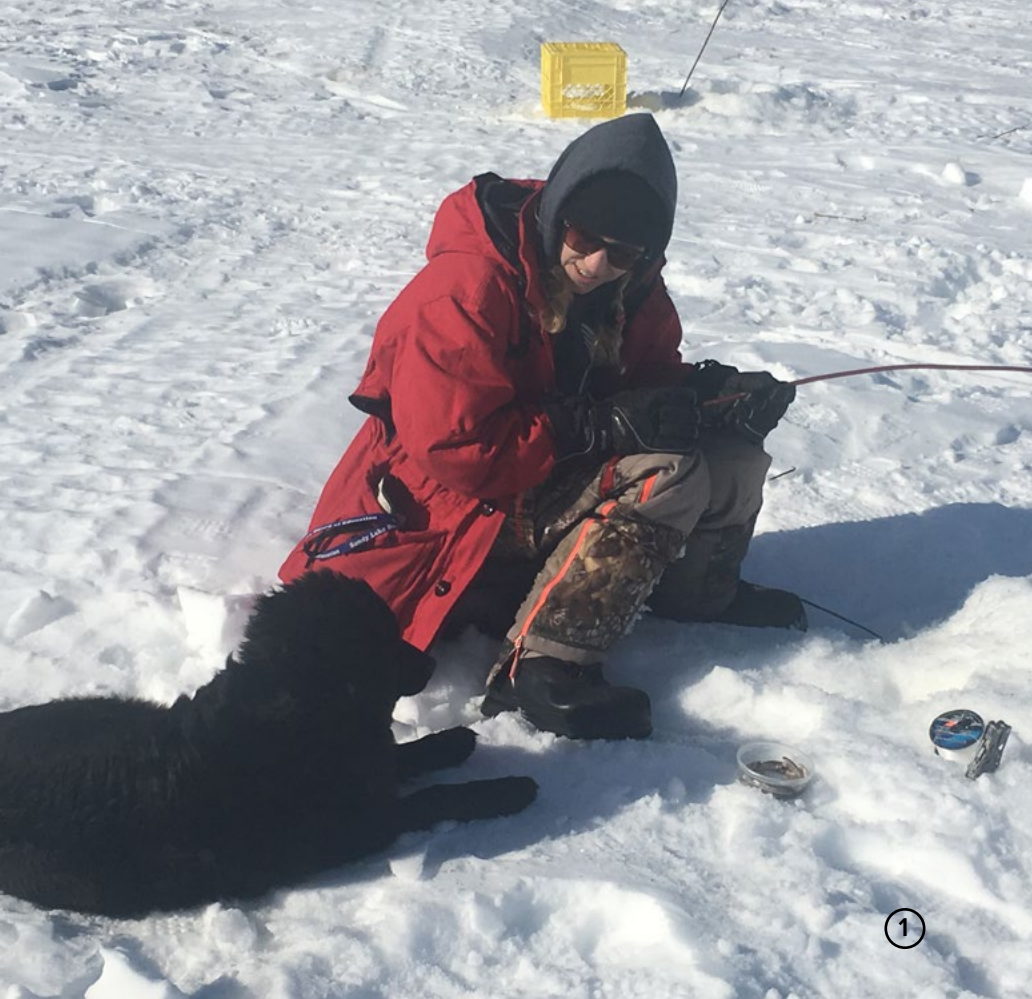
Students learn Oji-Cree during the native language lesson

⑧

High school basketball during Phys Ed

⑨

Sandy Lake in winter





5



6



7



8



9

Quick Facts

Community Name

Sandy Lake (Nego Sakaeeganeeg)

Tribal Council

Independent

Provincial Territorial Organization (PTO)

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation

Population On-Reserve



2,571

Language Spoken



**Oji-Cree
and English**

Treaty



Treaty 5

Average Yearly Temperature



-22.8°C **17.6°C**
January July

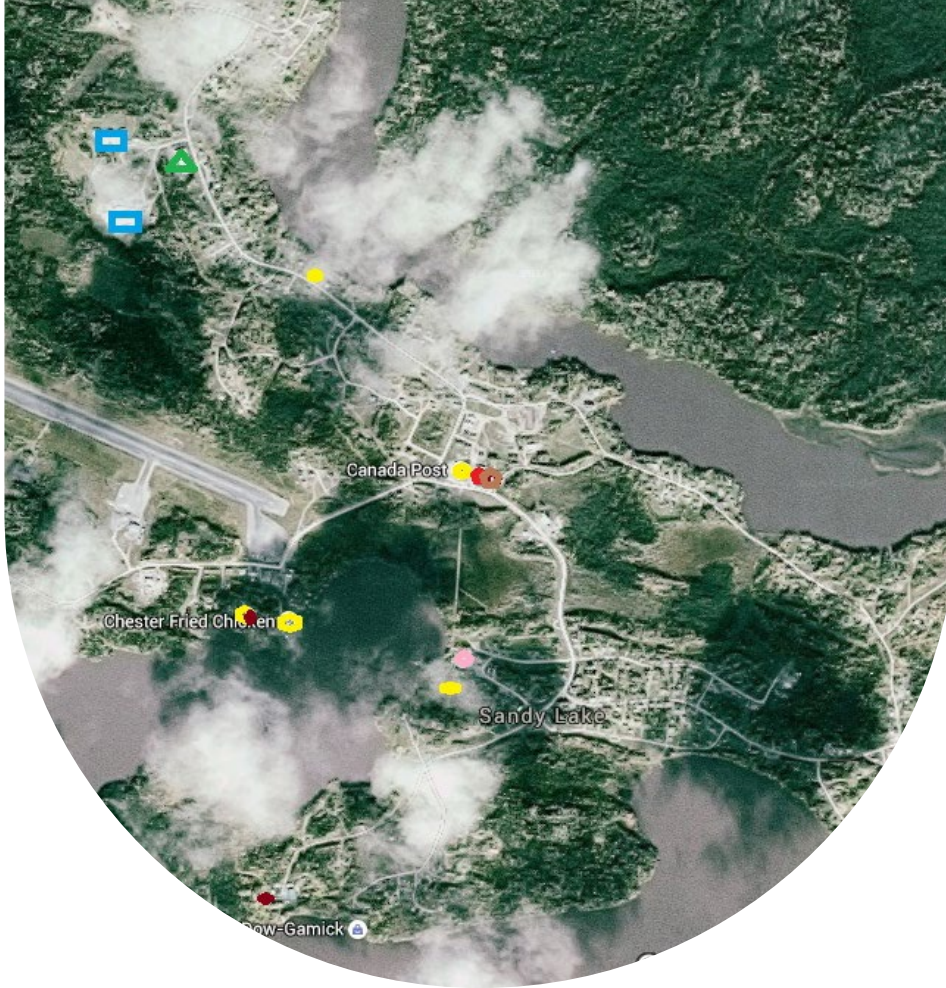
Access



Year-round



Jan - Mar



Sandy Lake Directory

A-Dow-Gamik Enterprises
(807) 774-1061

Air Sandy
(807) 774-1219

Band Office
(807) 774-3421

Wasaya Airlines/Agent
(807) 774-1094

**Community Hall,
Recreation Office and Arena**
(807) 774-1437

Dans-Dans Store
(807) 774-1504

Fire Hall
(807) 774-1301

**Gabius Goodman
Memorial Learning Centre**
(807) 774-1271

Marci's Variety Store
(807) 774-1326

Mental Health Office
(807) 774-1471
Northern Store
(807) 774-4451

Nursing Station
(807) 774-3461

Ontario Works
(807) 774-5518

Perimeter Aviation
(807) 728-1469
(800) 665-8986

Police Station
(807) 774-4471

Post Office
(807) 774-3191

Radio Station
(807) 774-3191

Sandy Lake Motel
(807) 774-1519

**Thomas Fiddler Memorial
Elementary School**
(807) 774-4491

**Thomas Fiddler Memorial
High School**
(807) 774-1229

**Tikinagan Child and
Family Services**
(807) 774-1544

Walter's Gas Station
807-774-4545



@TEACHFORCANADA
TEACHFORCANADA.CA

CR number: 819967282RR0001