

WELCOME TO

Beaver Lake Cree Nation



**TEACH
FOR
CANADA**
GAKINAAMAAGE

A scenic sunset over a beach. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright reflection on the water. A sailboat is visible on the water. In the foreground, two people are sitting on the sand, looking towards the water. The sky is a mix of orange and blue. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

tansi



Beaver Lake Cree Nation

Dear Teachers,

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you as you prepare to embark on a new journey of living and teaching in our community. On behalf of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation, I would like to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for your decision to join us.

Beaver Lake Cree Nation is a unique community with a rich history and culture that we are proud to share with newcomers. We have lived in this area for generations and have developed a deep connection to the land and the natural resources that surround us. Our community is situated on Treaty 6 territory, and we strive to maintain strong connections with the land and with our neighbours.

Our school, Amisk Community School, is an essential part of our efforts to ensure that our children receive a quality education while also learning about their heritage and culture. We are excited about a brand new, state-of-the-art school that is in development in our community as well.

We have made significant strides in recent years to revitalize and promote our language, Cree, and integrate our culture into the curriculum. As such, we expect our teachers to share this vision and be passionate about teaching our students.

We understand that teaching in a First Nation may present unique challenges, but we also know that it can be incredibly rewarding. You will have the opportunity to work alongside passionate educators, learn from our culture and traditions, and make a positive impact on the lives of our students. Our community is small, but we are tight-knit and supportive of one another. We will do everything in our power to make you feel welcomed and valued.

As you prepare to begin your teaching journey in Beaver Lake Cree Nation, I encourage you to be open-minded and willing to learn from our community. Take the time to get to know our students, their families, and our community's elders. Embrace our culture and traditions and use them as a tool to connect with our students.

Once again, welcome to our community. We look forward to working with you and making a positive impact on the lives of our students.

Sincerely,

Chief and Council of Beaver Lake Cree Nation

Colleen Anderson
Education Liaison

Community

Beaver Lake Cree Nation is known as Amiskosâkahikanihk in our Nehiyaw language. At one time in our history, we were called “Beaver Lake First Nation”, however we recently confirmed our name as Beaver Lake Cree Nation. On our medical center sign, you can still see the name “Beaver Lake First Nation,” which reflects this history.



A Brief History

1500s

Evidence of pre-contact residence in the area in the form of early Cree pottery known as clearwater Punctate. The Cree had good relationships with early white fur traders, and were located along the “Fur Trade Route” which progressed through the Beaver River to the Athabasca River. The Cree thrived on the gifts of the Buffalo and Whitefish of the region

1876

September 8th, Chief Pee-Yas-See-Wah-We-Cha-Koot (Pee-ay-sis/Pee-ay-sees) and Councillor Pay-Pay-See-See-Moo signed Adhesion to Treaty No. 6 at Fort Pitt on behalf of Beaver Lake Band No. 131

1879

Decline of buffalo on traditional lands. First Nations communities interpreted the loss of the buffalo to be the “General Famine” covered under the famine clause of Treaty 6. The Canadian government countered by insisting that its grudging distribution of rations was a matter of favour, not Treaty obligation

1885

The North-West Resistance begins. First Nations communities cite the lack of or poor implementation of the provisions of Treaty 6 as a major reason for participation in the Resistance

The Department of Indian Affairs suspended the Treaty payment of \$5.00 per capita for the entire Band as punishment for the ransacking of the Hudson’s Bay Company Post at Lac La Biche which was instigated by Cree War Chief Wandering Spirit (Kapapamahchakwew). This punishment continued until 1887

1891

August 1, the Roman Catholic Sacred Heart Residential School is established at Lac La Biche

1898

Sacred Heart Residential School buildings moved to Saddle Lake First Nation and renamed Blue Quills

Prior to 1911

Indian Agents attempted to coerce members of the Beaver Lake Band to abandon their lands and move to Saddle Lake. This coercion was steadfastly resisted and the members were subjected to deprivation of food and other assistance promised by the Treaty. At this time, Beaver Lake Cree Nation was suffering greatly from the decline of fish and game in the region

May 31, 1911

The lands for Beaver Lake Indian Reserve No. 131 were set aside. The original treaty terms indicated that these lands would be set aside “within a reasonable time.” A nearby community, Saddle Lake Indian Reserve, was established in 1886. Due to recent epidemics and other factors, the land entitlement was based on the 1908 population of 105 rather than the population at the time of Treaty signing

- **Around 1950** Oral history from a late Elder of Beaver Lake Cree Nation "Around 1950 I remember following my late father through the bush, in the dark, secretly. We arrived at a clearing in Hay Lakes and the old men went into a lodge that was covered by trees. I now know this to have been a Chicken Dance Lodge. Us children lay on the ground and peeked in under the trees. That was the last time I recall us having Chicken Dance in Beaver Lake. Now we have Chicken Dance again."
- **1967** The first commercial development of the oil sands begins
- **1970** Following a protest by First Nations Members, Blue Quills Native Education Council was incorporated to take over operations of the former Blue Quills Indian Residential School and became the first Indigenous owned and governed educational centre in Canada
- **1982** The Constitution Act of 1982 affirms and recognizes as central the Treaty rights of the original peoples of Canada
- **Around 1980** Active discussion in the Nation and the leadership of the day around clean energy, food sovereignty and sustainability, and clean drinking water. It was from those discussions that Beaver Lake Cree Nation developed blueprints for Green Energy and bringing the Buffalo home. A small herd was purchased and returned to the land, in the centre of the Nation, where they stayed, until their recent relocation (to the Ranch)
- **1983** Band Office and Amisk Community School opened. Prior to Amisk Community School, Beaver Lake Cree Nation children were bussed off-Territory to receive their education. The Nation enacted their Treaty right to education and took control of their children's education
- **May 14, 2008** The Beaver Lake Cree released their Kétuskéno Declaration, which asserts their role as caretakers of their traditional territories and initiates the legal action. The First Nation claims Alberta and Canada have infringed Beaver Lake's Treaty rights by approving oil and gas and other developments throughout the First Nations' traditional Territory. Attached to the statement of claim is a schedule listing more than 15,000 asserted infringements of Beaver Lake's constitutionally protected rights. The court is asked to rule invalid government authorizations for thousands of petroleum projects in the First Nation' core Territory. As a result, the Beaver Lake Cree Nation Territory is now covered with over 35,000 oil and gas sites, 21,700 kilometres of seismic lines, 4,028 kilometres of pipeline and 948 kilometres of road
- **2015** September, former Blue Quills First Nations College becomes University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills. The prime objective of University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills is to promote a sense of pride in Indigenous heritage and reclaim traditional knowledge and practices
- **2019** An Alberta judge ordered Advance Payments (a special legal order which may require a government to pay a portion of trial costs) for \$600,000. The estimated cost of the trial is \$5 million
- **2020** The 2019 Advance Payments ruling is overturned by the Alberta Court of Appeal
- **Nov. 4, 2021** Beaver Lake Cree Nation filed an appeal with the Supreme Court of Canada regarding the overturning of Advance Payments
- **Mar. 18, 2022** The Supreme Court of Canada sides unanimously with Beaver Lake Cree Nation in an historic, precedent-setting landmark victory about Indigenous access to justice when it allowed Beaver Lake's appeal of the lower Court's order for advanced costs.

The Court recognized that a First Nation government could have access to resources that meet or exceed litigation costs but if it needs those resources to meet its pressing needs, it will still qualify for advance costs. The Court also recognized Indigenous self-determination by saying that pressing needs must be understood from the perspective of the particular First Nation government, considering the broader context within which a First Nation government makes decisions
- **July 2022** We recently completed the Amisk Solar Project which saw 94 solar panels installed in our school. These new solar panels will provide more than 24,000 kWh/year and reduce up to 15 tons of carbon emissions. The first installment began December 2016
- **2022** New Hall (Multi-purpose building) created
- **2024** The Treaty rights 120-day litigation that Beaver Lake put forward in 2008 is scheduled to being in January 2024



The Land

Our community is located on Beaver Lake, 105 kilometres northeast of Edmonton, Alberta.

We are located on Treaty 6 Territory and honour this treaty. You will see the Treaty 6 flag flying outside our Band Office, and inside that office we have framed copies of our Treaties. We are located in beautiful lake country on Beaver Lake, Lac Lacroix, and Maurice Lake among many others in the area.

Our Territory is an area of boreal forest the size of Switzerland from the Hudson-James Bay region to the foot of the Rocky Mountains and in Alberta between the north banks of the North Saskatchewan River to Fort Chipewyan. We are 15 minutes south of Lac La Biche County (population 2,316), 1.5 hours west of Cold Lake (population 14,961), and 2.5 hours northeast of Edmonton (population 981,280).

Beaver Lake Community Map





Community Events

There are a number of beautiful events which happen annually at Beaver Lake Cree Nation. Some of the events which we hope you will attend include: Harvest Week Celebrations, Summer Medicine Camp, our school Pow Wow (where children learn traditional dances, ribbon skirt making, beading, and other skills), Round Dances, Sun Dance, Chicken Dance, Horse Dance, Tribal Chiefs Education Foundation Camp, and Teen Camp (where children learn about sexuality, hygiene, and traditional responsibilities teachings).

Getting Involved

Teachers are welcomed at and encouraged to join our community events. Check out our [Amisk Community School Facebook Page](#).

Language and Customs

We are a Nehiyaw Nation and follow Nehiyaw traditions and customs. There is also a small non-denominational Christian church on Territory.



Beaver Lake Cree Nation Community Pow Wow



Our annual community Pow Wow is one of the largest in the area, and attracts more than 450 competitors across Canada and the United States.

Pow Wow photo courtesy of [festivalseekers.com](#)



Amisk Community School



School Population

104

Grades

Pre-Kindergarten
to Grade 12

Education Liason

Colleen Anderson

Principal

Elaine Boucher

Welcome!

Amisk (Beaver) Community School is named after our community and the beautiful lake on our Territory. Our school and band office were built in 1983. This spring, we are excited to be breaking ground on a brand new, state-of-the-art school.

Our high school is run remotely and located in our portable building, with dedicated support staff.

Vision Statement

The Beaver Lake Board of Education believes that Beaver Lake Cree Nation will become a healthy, self-sufficient safe environment and community with the retention of the culture and the language. Further, the Board of Education will strive to maintain quality education which will create opportunities for all students to succeed in what endeavours they have chosen for themselves.

What is your school proud of?

We are most proud of how much we value our culture and language. Our leadership is always encouraging us to be an active and welcoming community, and teachers are encouraged to be involved in the community as well as the school. The relationship between our community and our school is very strong, and our school is often a hub of community events.





School Facilities

Kitchen (hot breakfast/snacks/lunch), Gym (with stage for school events), High School Portable (2 classrooms, 4 grades (Grade 9/10 and SC-Cyber for Grade 11/12)), Library, Land-Based Classroom, Cree Classroom, Inclusive Ed Classroom (Speech and Occupational Therapy), Sensory Room, and Staff Lounge.

Extracurricular activities

Outdoor education, cultural activities, music, volleyball (3-4 times a week), badminton. In addition to these cultural immersion opportunities, the school holds a Career Fair.

We also take the children ice fishing, snowshoeing, skiing, skating, swimming, and we have a track & field team.

Unique Classes Offered

Multigrade classrooms, Elders in School, Land-Based Education, Cree Language Classes, Inclusive Education.

Clubs

Youth Club (weekly at the health centre), Toronto Blue Jays' Jays Care, where players come to the school and speak to students. Each Tribal Chiefs Education Foundation community fields a team and we play against each other in a friendly competition. We also have a Culture Club in progress.





A Day in the Life of a Teacher

- Bus arrives:** 8:30-8:45 AM
- Morning Recess:** 10:30-10:45 AM
- Lunch:** 12:15-12:40 PM
- Afternoon Recess:** 2:00-2:15 PM
- Dismissal:** 3:30 PM

Our teachers work from 8 AM-4 PM. Teachers are expected to greet students in the morning and serve hot breakfast, which is delivered to the classroom.

We all do supervision of breaks on a schedule, with 3-4 supervisions throughout the week. On cold days, breaks are held inside the gym.

Teachers have one preparation period of 40 minutes per day while the students are in the gym.

Sports events happen after school, and all teachers are expected to utilize land-based learning opportunities.

Lac La Biche features housing for teachers, and we will support teachers in finding residence.

We are pleased to present teachers with several bonuses including:

- an annual retreat
- a Signing Bonus
- a Christmas Bonus
- a Year-End Bonus



Get to Know A Beaver Lake Cree Nation Community Member

MEET TANYA SHUKALIAK

Grade 5-6 Teacher, member of Beaver Lake Cree Nation

A little about Tanya

My first job was as a Red Seal Chef. While I was in that role I got the chance to teach others and I really enjoyed it. I made the decision to switch to teaching, and I love passing on knowledge to others!

I was actually part of the first group of students who came through Amisk Community School, and now I get to teach the next generation. I've come full-circle!

What do you like most about working at the school?

There are a lot of cultural experiences and lots of time is spent on learning culture. We all get to learn together. The opportunity to engage in learning about culture was taken from my mother, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn now.

What advice do you have for teachers coming to your school?

If you come here, it's important to create relationships and get involved. We don't want tourists, we want someone who stays. We are in Lakeland County, there are lakes and ski hills and so much to do outdoors. And if you don't like the outdoors, the Bold Centre [in Lac La Biche] is a great indoor sports complex.



Quick Facts

Community Name
Beaver Lake Cree Nation

Tribal Council
Tribal Chiefs Ventures Incorporated



Population On-Reserve



440

Language Spoken



**Wood Cree
and English**

Treaty



**Adhesion to
Treaty 6**

Average Yearly Temperature



-13°C
January

17°C
July

Access



Year-round

Around the Community



Getting to Beaver Lake Cree Nation

We are easily accessible by main roads.

Nearest airport: Edmonton

International (2.5 hours)

Fort MacMurray: 3 hours

Lac La Biche: 15 minutes

Cold Lake: 1.5 hours

Life in the Community

There is lots of fishing, boating, and beautiful lakes in our land. We see moose, bear, deer, rabbits and other small animals, birds, and fish. There is a splash park for kids in Lac La Biche, and lots of walking trails nearby.

①

Health Centre

②

Old Church

③

Busy Beaver Store

④

Ice Fishing







Directory

Amisk Community School

Lac La Biche, AB, T0A 2C0
780-623-4548

Band Office

780-623-4549

Beaver Lake Health Services

780-623-4276

Lac La Biche RCMP

780-623-4012
(Non-emergency)

**Lac La Biche (A&P
& Independent)**

Busy Beaver Store
780-623-6530

**Spruce Point Resort and
Campground**

780-623-3930

Bold Centre Arena

780-623-3829

Public Works

780-623-4577

Beaver Lake Multiplex

M3JV93 Lac la Biche, Alberta

**Beaver Lake Cree Nation
Fire Hall**

(Call band office to reach)
M3JV93 Lac la Biche, Alberta



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