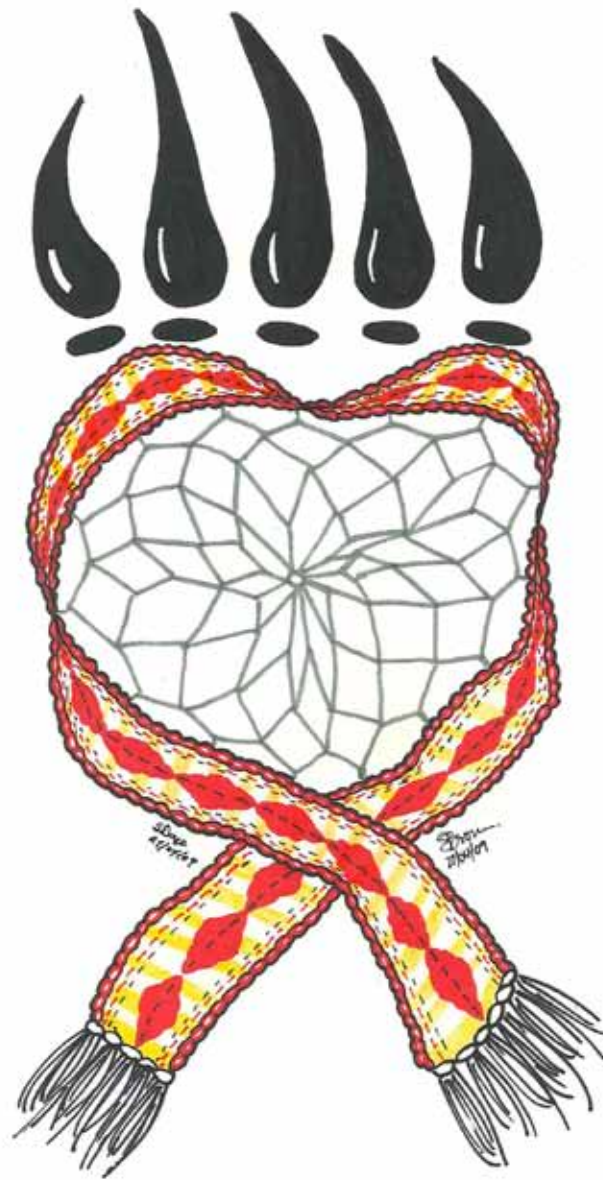

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF SASKATCHEWAN EDUCATORS AND NON-EDUCATORS TOWARDS THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS ACHIEVEMENT



BY DR. SHAUNEEN PETE AND ASSOCIATES CONSULTING
RESEARCH REPORT #13-01

This report was commissioned by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

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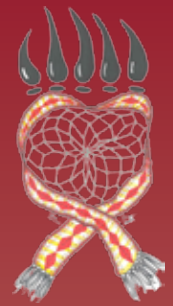
A copy of this report is available on the Saskatchewan School Boards Association website at www.saskschoolboards.ca.



Thanks is extended to Shelley Brown and Shelley Daye for providing the artwork. The bear paw is symbolic of power and protection and the colours yellow, red, white and black represent the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical health of First Nations people. The Métis sash symbolizes the pride of the Métis people. The dream catcher is used to unite both First Nations and Métis peoples and to show that nations united are stronger than any one alone to support each other in power, health and friendship.

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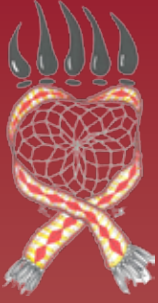
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Saskatchewan School Board Association (SSBA) secured the contractor to undertake the development of a summary report to strengthen the engagement and success of First Nations and Métis students in the province of Saskatchewan. Dr. Shauneen Pete (the researcher) is from Little Pine First Nation in west-central Saskatchewan. She has worked as a teacher, educational consultant, education professor, vice-president (academics) and interim president at First Nations University of Canada. She is an Assistant Professor at the University of Regina (Aboriginal Education and Educational Core Studies). Her research areas include: indigenizing the academy, decolonizing faculty work and Elders in schools.

It was agreed that the contractor would provide the following services:

- 1) Conduct a survey of the attitudes and perceptions of boards of education, administrators, and teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure there is an understanding of the need and support for improving First Nations and Métis achievement.
- 2) Develop a summary report addressing a framework with a consistent set of achievement measures that are the foundation for the sector to assist in evaluations to assess progress on First Nations and Métis (FNM) student achievement including:
 - a) Determining and developing a complete and consistent set of achievement measures;
 - b) Benchmarking the current state of these measures; and
 - c) Providing direction(s) to the sector where these measures can be applied and used to eliminate the achievement gap for FNM students.
- 3) Address where the Ministry of Education and/or SSBA have identified schools that are experiencing substantially higher student achievement scores among FNM students compared to the provincial average, the report will:
 - a) Identify the environmental conditions and activities that are the foundation for these exceptional outcomes;
 - b) Assess whether current board of education initiatives assist in contributing to the elimination of the achievement gap for FNM students; and
 - c) Recommend how these environmental conditions, activities and/or initiatives may be applied in other school divisions to support and improve student success.
- 4) Incorporating results from the survey (1), and the recommendations for information and supports needed for divisions to assist in understanding the need for action on First Nations and Métis achievement.





- 5) Address whether an increase in Aboriginal participation on boards of education would positively impact achievement for FNM students, then the contractor will:
 - a) Identify barriers and challenges of increasing the number of Aboriginal trustees in the central and southern part of the province; and
 - b) Develop recommendations for the SSBA to assist boards in engaging FNM peoples to participate in the publicly funded education system.

In order to address the complex and divergent aspects of the research project the contractor secured First Nations educator Sarah Longman to work on specific aspects of the review and report development. Ms. Longman has worked as a teacher, education professor, education equity consultant, and school division Aboriginal transitions consultant.

The research project was undertaken from September 2012 to March 2013. A detailed work plan was submitted to the SSBA on August 25, 2012 and work began in earnest shortly thereafter. The draft document was presented to the SSBA on January 15, 2013. The final document was submitted in March 2013.

As this contract required several components, each component will be addressed separately in the following sections:

- I. The Survey
- II. A Summary Report
- III. Divisions Successfully Addressing the Achievement Gap
- IV. Recommendations
- V. Diversifying the Trustee Pool

SECTION I: THE SURVEY

A survey to determine the attitudes and perceptions of Saskatchewan educators and non-educators towards the importance of First Nations and Métis achievement.

PURPOSE

The SSBA requested the development of a survey to determine the attitudes and perceptions of provincial educators and others towards the importance of First Nations and Métis achievement. The contractor asked Ms. Sarah Longman to serve as co-researcher on this component of the larger contract. The following section outlines the methodology, data collection methods, participants, the findings and recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

As identified above, the purpose of the study was to explore attitudes and perceptions of the importance of First Nations and Métis achievement in Saskatchewan schools divisions. This study used a mixed methods approach. Document analysis informed the development of the survey. The researchers combined a review of current practices and policy frameworks of provincial Ministries of Education across Canada; Saskatchewan Ministry of Education documents and policies, including the Continuous Improvement and Accountability Framework (CIAF); school division Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs) and school Learning Improvement Plans (LIPs); a literature review, as well as survey data analysis. This information was triangulated to validate, summarize and frame recommendations.

SURVEY DESIGN

The survey was designed to explore the attitudes and perceptions of the importance of FNM student achievement. The survey design was informed by the attitude questions posed in *A Time for Significant Leadership* (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010). We also used *Tools 4 Schools* developed by Regina Public Schools to examine the levels of Aboriginal content integration. Additionally, we based the survey design on our prior research and experience in topics of culturally responsive teaching, culturally responsive schooling, and the inclusion of FNM content.

The survey included questions to address attitudes and perceptions of provincial policy, and division and school practices regarding FNM learners and achievement. The survey included questions about the self-declaration process and curriculum actualization to support FNM content integration. Additional information about the participants is provided in the next section.





PARTICIPANTS

The survey was designed at the direction of the SSBA. It was meant to include the comments of school-based administrators, and teaching and non-teaching staff. This study was intended to be distributed province-wide.

Prior to the distribution of the survey the SSBA had informed school division directors of education that the request for survey distribution and participation was forthcoming. The researchers drafted a letter and accompanying survey link. The letter and link were provided to every director of education in the province's 28 school divisions and three affiliated divisions.

The letter to the directors of education outlined the purpose of the survey. The letter identified the request to send the survey to school-based administrators; it provided a timeline for completion; and identified the researchers contact information so that they could address any issues or concerns arising from participating in the survey (Appendix).

The researchers received some feedback requesting clarification of research participants. Some divisions wanted clarification about the participation of speech pathologists, teaching assistants and others who they viewed may have been limited in their ability to respond to all questions. The researchers believed that input from these non-teaching staff was essential as they work very closely with a largely FNM student population. The researchers affirmed that all teaching and non-teaching staff were invited to respond.

PILOT OF SURVEY

The survey (Appendix) was piloted by a small sample group of school administrators, teachers and school staff within a single school division. The purpose of the pilot was threefold:

- To determine whether the survey questions were understood by respondents;
- To determine the estimated length of time to complete the survey; and
- To ensure technology links were functioning properly.

Feedback on the survey led to some modifications to the design. The survey was also shared with SSBA contacts and feedback from them was also considered in the modifications.

WEB-BASED SURVEY

Qualtrics Web Surveys (Qualtrics) is a hosted survey tool that allowed the researchers to create an unlimited number of surveys. Qualtrics was designed for social researchers, so it naturally had a robust yet intuitive interface. The co-researcher had utilized the program in another study and was familiar with the potential for its use in this study.

Using Qualtrics the researchers were able to design online survey questions which included close-ended questions supported by the use of a likert-scale, as

well as open-ended questions to allow for long-form responses. A likert rating scale was used to determine the participant's percentage consensus on key issues. The 5-point likert scale gathered responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." We also included open-ended questions in order to discover any issues the participants had that may have not been addressed in the rating scale questions. These questions, in general, were designed to discover the participants' attitudes and perceptions of FNM education, and FNM achievement in particular.

The distribution method that offered the most features and flexibility was the Qualtrics Mailer. The researchers created panels in .csv format that included email addresses for all the school division directors (recipients) and identified each school division. The creation of panels (school division directors of education) ensured the researchers did not have direct contact with teachers and non-teachers in the schools thus addressing issues of anonymity and confidentiality. The Qualtrics Mailer feature was used to send emails to each panel. In these emails, each recipient received a letter and the unique link to access the survey. This allowed the researchers to control access to the survey; provided the ability to track respondents as well as associate respondents with panel data; we could customize invitations; track mailing history; and send reminders and "thank you" emails.

Qualtrics provided a limited set of reports for use by the research team. These reports were used in the analysis of survey data. Some examples of the tables, and charts generated using the report feature are included in this report. The next sections will outline the study limitations, survey analysis and findings.

LIMITATIONS

There were several limitations to the survey, including:

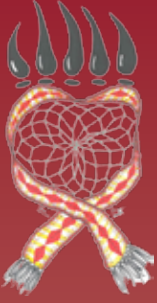
SAMPLING

Sampling and respondent availability is an issue with electronic surveys. Certain populations in rural areas of the province are expected to be less likely to have internet access and therefore were unable to participate in online questionnaires in a high number. It was also harder to draw probability samples based on email addresses or website visitations.

POSSIBLE COOPERATION PROBLEMS

Although online surveys in many fields can attain response rates equal to or slightly higher than that of traditional modes, we understood that schools and teachers are constantly requested to partake in several studies and research projects over the course of the school year. In at least one school division, policy states that requests for research within the division will only be considered twice a year. Due to the short data collection cycle, this research project was not submitted as per the division's policy and may have been rejected because of that. In other locations we recognize that over stuffing of inboxes with request messages can contribute to a lower participation rate due to deletion of the forwarded email.





Without appearing to be too pessimistic, we wondered if the nature of the topic “First Nations and Métis education” and the request to participate in an “attitudes and perception survey” resulted in or contributed to the low participation rates. In our experience as educational consultants in school divisions, too often we had experienced a lack of interest and commitment to FNM education on the part of some mainstream educators. In our experience, we understood that educators too often expressed that “the parents” needed to do more or “the FNM teachers needed to do something.” As educators involved in anti-oppressive and social justice program delivery we understood that these types of deflections often allowed educators to be “off the hook for” their lack of responsiveness – claiming ignorance as one way of avoiding taking responsibility for the achievement of FNM learners.

As educators working actively on equity matters in public education, we can’t help but think that the low respondent rates are connected to the attitudes and perceptions about the value that educators place on FNM achievement. However, we also recognize that province-wide network changes may have had more of an impact than attitudes did on our rate of participation.

ACCESS

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education has implemented the use of a new technology program. CommunityNet is a provincial initiative to connect educational facilities, Saskatchewan schools, regional colleges, public libraries, health agencies and government departments into a private network. This network is separated from the internet, yet provides access to the internet, and to provincial, national and international advanced research networks to users in other CommunityNet locations within a protected, controlled environment. CommunityNet allows access to websites, email, videoconferencing and any other IP services available on the internet or within CommunityNet.

Some school divisions and institutions have disabled various types of internet traffic or they block access to specific sites in order to restrict traffic or access to objectionable content or material or to non-education related sites. The school division network administrator is responsible for blocking sites and disabling traffic.

When the survey was initially distributed the researchers received emails from a few divisions who had trouble forwarding the message to school-based staff. As a result, some divisions were able to access the electronic survey while other divisions were unable to due to restricted access of traffic. Some network administrators contacted the researchers to identify the access problems. The researchers changed settings in order to allow for the re-distribution of the survey in the school division.

DISTRIBUTION



The researchers intended to use the IP addresses as one means of determining and tracking participation rates. The use of CommunityNet posed some unique challenges to survey distribution. The method of distribution limits the amount of control over who receives a copy of the survey, and it made sending reminders or follow-up surveys difficult. The researchers had to change the settings on the distribution of the survey from a one-time use to a multiple link setting. This made it impossible to know how many copies of the survey have been sent out, in turn, making it impossible to calculate an estimated response rate.

Another unforeseen limitation to the distribution of the survey was the timing of suspected malicious spam that was circulating throughout education systems. This resulted in the original survey being deleted upon delivery. In turn the survey was resent to a number of recipients at their request.

We want to assert that a number of approaches were taken to distribute the survey province-wide, and the timeline for completion was extended twice. In the end, we received 137 responses representing eight school divisions. This number represents a very small percentage of the over 11,490 school based teaching and non-teaching staff in the province (Education Sector Staffing Profile, Oct. 2012).

SURVEY ANALYSIS

The survey data was compiled from the Qualtrics survey software, and descriptive statistics – mean, range, variance and standard deviation – were used to analyze the data. Additionally, the data was organized into three different types of visuals: graphs, bar-charts and statistical tables. These descriptive statistics were the most appropriate and accurate way to describe the collected data.

The researchers met to review the initial findings. Observations were made of the data charts, graphs and tables. Data were cross-referenced with the text responses provided in the open-ended question section. From the triangulation of the survey data with information gathered in the literature review and review of Ministry of Education documents, recommendations were developed.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Survey participants included 137 respondents from eight school divisions. The majority (81%) of survey participants were non-Aboriginal (Figure 1). The researchers not only expected greater participation rates, but also greater participation rates amongst FNM educators and non-teaching staff. The researchers assumed that because of the nature of the study, a greater number of FNM educators would be invested in the outcomes of the study.

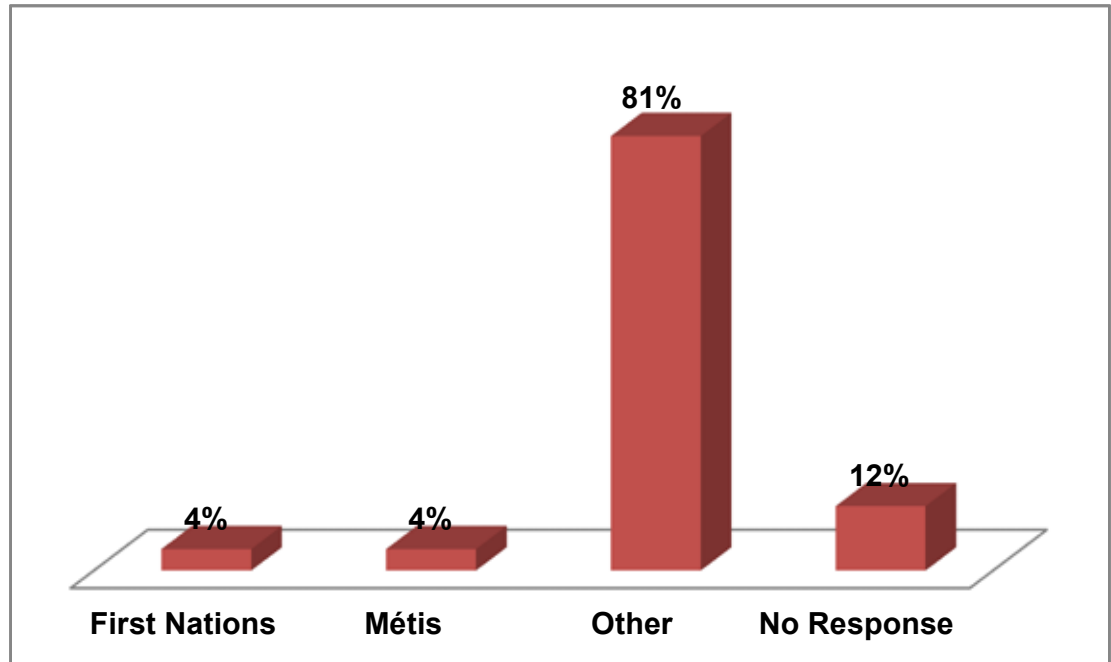


Figure 1. Self-identification data: Percentage of participants by self-declared identity.

The researchers understood that the majority of educators in the province of Saskatchewan are non-Aboriginal. Prior studies, such as those undertaken by St. Denis, Bouvier and Battiste (1999) found that Aboriginal educators make up less than 3% of the teaching population in the province of Saskatchewan.

The researchers found that of the participants in the survey, 60% self-identified as teachers while 26% identified as school-based administrators and an additional 14% identified themselves as staff. Additionally, the researchers wanted to determine how long respondents had been working in schools. We believed that changes to the preparation of teachers in our province including: anti-oppressive education, social justice education, mandatory Treaty education and a prerequisite course in native studies would mean that attitudes and perceptions of newer educators would look markedly different from educators who have been in the field for a time. We found that there were an equal number of respondents who were relatively new to teaching and those that were more experienced (Figure 2). The sample size was too small to determine whether years of service impacted on the perceptions and attitudes toward FNM achievement.

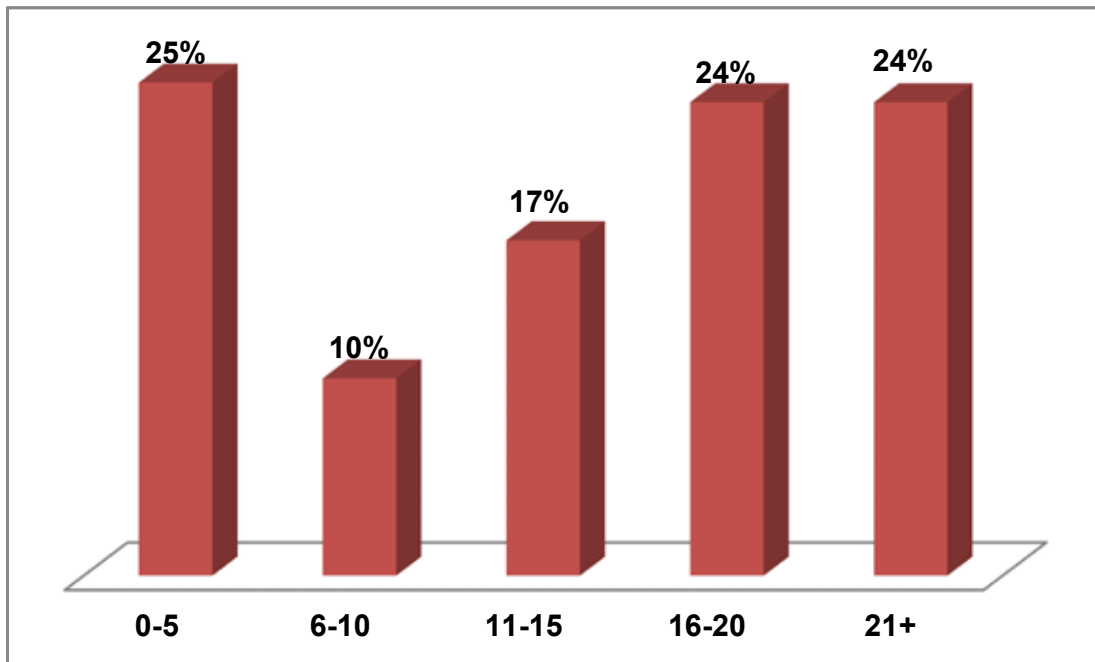


Figure 2. Percentage of respondents by years of service.

Additionally, the researchers wanted to determine the supports in place for teachers and others working to close the gap on FNM achievement. These survey questions focused on the student self-declaration policy within the system; access to professional development on FNM education; and whether or not they had a clear strategic outcome for improving achievement results for FNM learners; and whether they were aware of data collected on FNM achievement. Lastly, we were curious about whether the respondents knew if achievement data were shared publicly. These findings are outlined below (Figure 3).

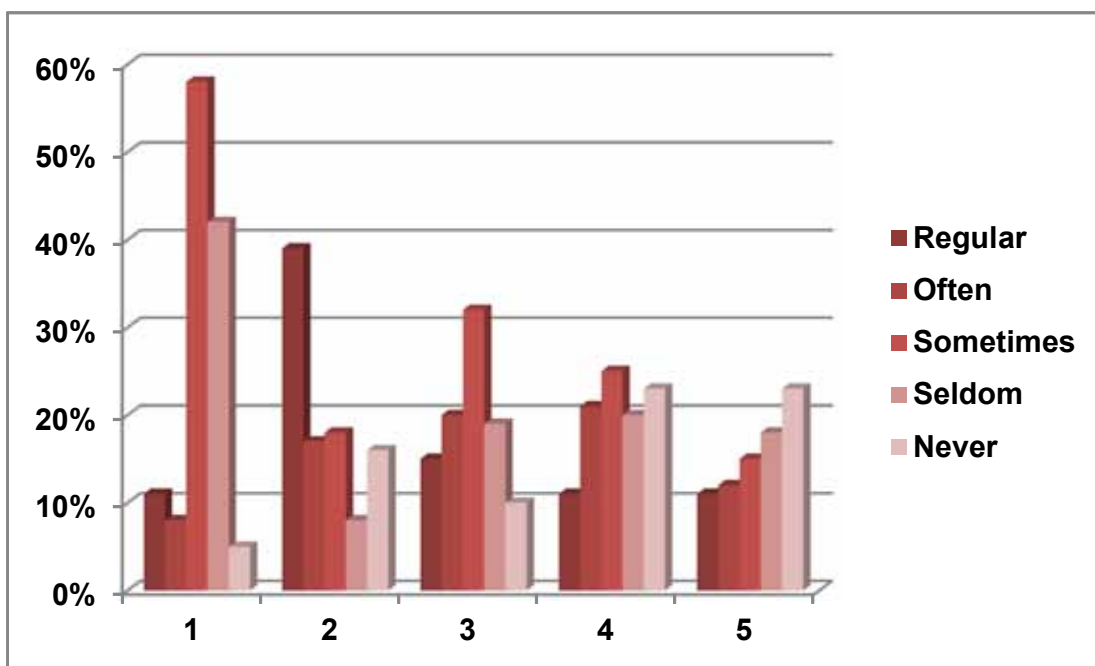
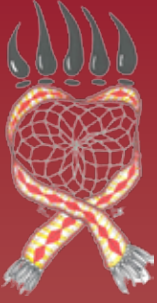


Figure 3. Snapshot of division activities.



In 1985, The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission expanded the collection of self-declaration data for FNM learners to the provincial education system. In The Ministry of Education's *2008 Saskatchewan Education Indicators* report noted that 20% of the total student population self-declared Aboriginal ancestry. This province has been actively involved in the collection of self-identification data, yet respondents are unsure of whether their divisions have a FNM self-declaration policy in place, even though this collection of these statistics is required under the Continuous Improvement Framework.

The provincial Ministry of Education and boards of education have been offering a range of professional development opportunities aimed at supporting FNM education for over thirty years. An example of Ministry of Education developed policy is the 1989 *First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework*. The Ministry of Education provided project-based funding to support the integration of Aboriginal content (IMED grants). It also developed *Diverse Voices: Selecting Equitable Resources for FNM Education* (1991) to directly support teachers in choosing resources for their classrooms and *Aboriginal Elders and Community Workers in Schools: A Guide for School Divisions and their Partners* (2001).

Boards of education have also initiated policy and professional development offerings including: *Make-n-Takes of Aboriginal-Themed Resources*; *How to Work with Aboriginal Peoples and Communities*; and *Working with Elders in Schools*. Boards of education have also been accessing the Office of the Treaty Commissioner to provide on-site training in Treaty education.

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the universities' faculties of education and other organizations have actively developed and offered professional development as well. The researchers were concerned with the findings as presented above (Figure 3) that demonstrate that the vast majority of respondents sometimes, or seldom participate in professional development to support their professional growth in the area of FNM education. Yet, we know from our professional practice that educators claim that there are not enough sessions or a variety of sessions. Once again, we don't intend to be overly negative here, but in our experience blaming the lack of division professional development opportunities can be one way of educators avoiding taking responsibility for their own professional growth on topics associated with FNM education.

When respondents were asked to identify their professional development needs, some said they needed:

- Live, regular workshop and in-services to teach and or help teach our educators;
- ...more PD and resources for ALL teachers, not just social studies teachers, on First Nations and Métis...; and
- ...meaningful professional development that focuses on effectively integrating FNM materials into my subject area.

In our experience in delivering professional opportunities throughout the province we have learned that the number one request from teachers is for more professional development on FNM themes. The second most frequently occurring request is for resources to use in their classrooms. Respondents said that they needed:

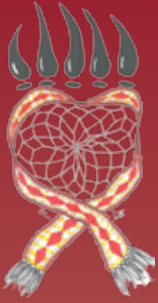
- More children's books that represent FNM people;
- Correspondence materials for native studies 10, 20 and 30 to meet the very real needs of our students;
- More Grade-level appropriate books; and
- More French instructional materials and resources on FNM peoples.

Although we recognize that there may be a lack of Grade appropriate resources currently available we need to assist teacher's in two key ways: using the resources they do have more effectively and recognizing that resources for classrooms include materials other than just print materials.

On the first point, using the resources they do have more effectively. There is a paradigm shift occurring in planning for learning that includes a shift away from the notion of planning for the Grade level to planning for the developmental level of the learner. Differentiated classrooms are those that engage learners where they are. Educators are being challenged to shift their thinking towards differentiated instruction by focusing on pre-assessment connected to grouping based on the learner's needs. Likewise, they are being asked to consider a variety of teaching resources to suit the learner's needs. Using a variety of resources, including picture books, video, web-based resources and other materials can provide a highly motivating learning opportunity for the student. This shift means that educators need not focus so much on Grade appropriate resources, but must focus on the use of a variety of resources based on the learning needs and interests of the student.

On the second point, it is critical that teachers, administrators and other staff connect personally with FNM parents, community resource people, Elders, and knowledge keepers. In the Ministry of Education document entitled *Aboriginal Elders and Community Workers in Schools* (2001) recommendations and directions on how to engage Elders and others are clearly outlined. The benefits are explored and explained. These human resources provide more authentic learning experiences both for the educator and for the student. We recognize that engaging in relationship building takes many educators out of the comfort zone of relying on print resources; however, research on FNM pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching shows that authentic relationships are a foundation for building culturally competent educators.





With that said, we asked questions to better understand how educators are addressing the learning program for FNM and other learners, particularly the ways in which they are working with FNM peoples and communities. We found a small percentage (9%) of educators rely on FNM community peoples to supplement classroom teaching (Figure 4).

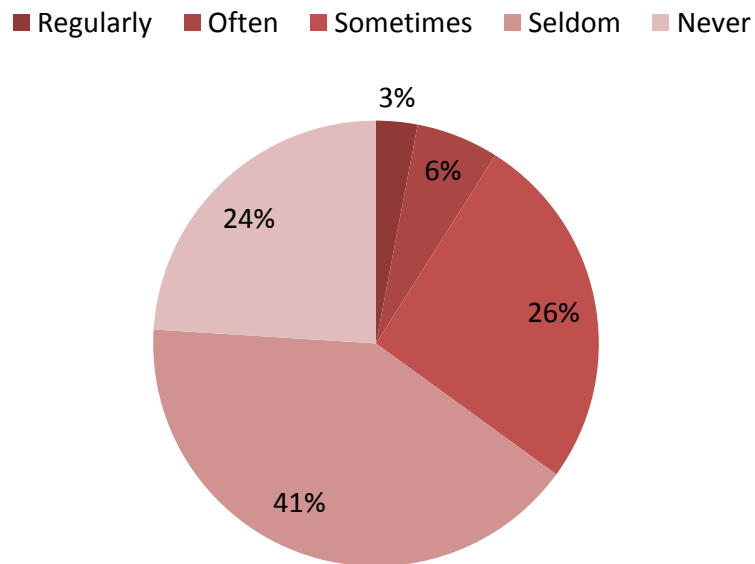


Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who engage FNM community members as resource people.

A higher percentage (65%) stated that they seldom to never use community resource people. Similarly, few respondents invite Elders into their classroom (Figure 6). Only 9% say they regularly invite Elders into their classrooms, while 67% never invite Elders into their classrooms. Engaging elders and community members as authentic informants in public education has been a provincial practice for over twenty years. Certainly several policy frameworks, in-service opportunities and teacher-led research projects have been widely available for educators to learn from (i.e. the Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation has provided monetary support for teacher-led research with elders). Elders can facilitate partnership development in the community; they can augment and correct existing curriculum; they demonstrate different communication norms; they add to school culture; and they affirm student identity.

In our own work on Elders in schools (Goulet, Pete, Longman, Racette, Fayant, and Pelletier, 2008; 2009) and more recently in the report entitled *Elders in Schools* (Pete and Longman, 2012) we found that both teachers and students benefit from the participation of Elders and other traditional knowledge keepers. However, many respondents in this survey claim that they require a “list of resource people willing to come into their schools.” Some respondents claim that because of local demographics they find it difficult to identify elders and traditional knowledge keepers in their communities. In our view, this very Western approach to identifying resource people has remained ineffective – educators have to move out of their comfort zone and actually engage meaningfully with the students and parents in their communities to identify

where traditional knowledge is found. Educators have to ask a different range of questions to be able to identify knowledge keepers in their communities and beyond. Asking a parent or caregivers who are the language speakers, traditional teachers that they are comfortable with may lead into a more locally responsive approach to getting to know elders and others.

Identifying traditional knowledge keepers in the area is just the first step; many mainstream educators also struggle with their role and responsibilities in regard to the Elder in their classroom. They often speak about feeling “fearful of being seen as racist” and “not doing things correctly.” Teachers must be active learners alongside their students to both demonstrate culturally competency development and to affirm the importance of learning about and from FNM peoples. As co-learners teachers must choose to be present in the classroom, this is not a time for planning or other matters. We concluded, “teachers must engage in their own cultural negotiations to mediate the Elders ways of knowing with the curriculum...they have to make curriculum linkages obvious for the learners... through scaffolding and connecting learning...” (Pete and Longman, 2012).

Perhaps these percentages are due to the large number of non-Aboriginal respondents in our sample; perhaps it is due to a low level of cultural competency on the part of respondents. Whatever the case may be, divisions may have to play a more active role in discovering why staff are not engaging community members and Elders in the classroom. Division leadership will have to play an active role in modeling for educators how to engage in meaningful relationships with FNM peoples.

■ Regularly ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Seldom ■ Never

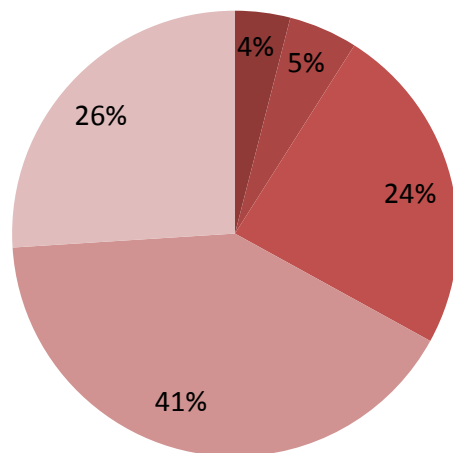
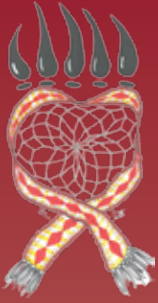


Figure 5. The percentage of respondents who invite Elders into their classrooms.

Integrating First Nations and Métis ways of knowing and traditional pedagogy into the Saskatchewan education system benefits both students and teachers. Both students and teachers can learn in a relational manner to deepen understanding of Indigenous worldviews (*Inspiring Success*, 2009). Teachers need to practice creating authentic relationships with FNM people and they need to practice choosing resources for use in the classroom.





The Ministry of Education document, *Inspiring Success: Building Towards Student Achievement* (2009), outlines the strategy of selecting equitable resources in both English and French that promote the understanding of the histories, languages and cultures of FNM peoples. It is the intent that FNM content be integrated in all subject areas. These policies are not new as the expectation to integrate FNM perspectives into the curriculum has been in effect for over two decades. Policies to support selecting fair and equitable resources have also been accessible for over 20 years.

For some respondents who are practicing how to incorporate FNM perspectives and content they appear to be much more comfortable with using materials that already exist (print, art, literature and novels). Survey respondents (31%) indicated using FNM art and literature written and illustrators to enhance the learning in their classrooms while 58% indicated they do so sometimes and seldom (Figures 6 and 7).

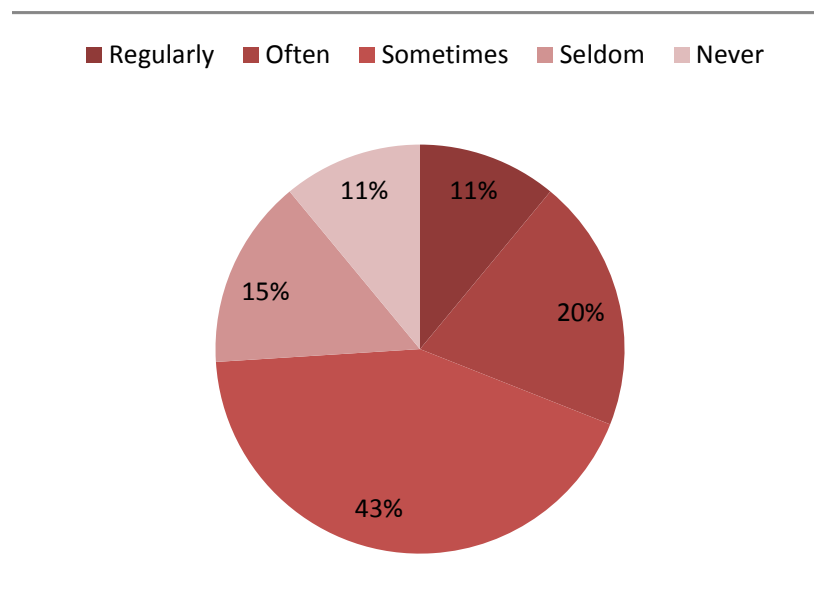


Figure 6. Educators who choose art and literature as one means to integrate content.

While the Ministry of Education recognizes the importance of literacy, only 25% of respondents indicated that they use novels, stories and poems written by First Nations or Métis authors often or sometimes. What is of concern for the researchers is that a quarter of respondents never or seldom include these resources in their classrooms (Figures 6 and 7).

■ Regularly ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Seldom ■ Never

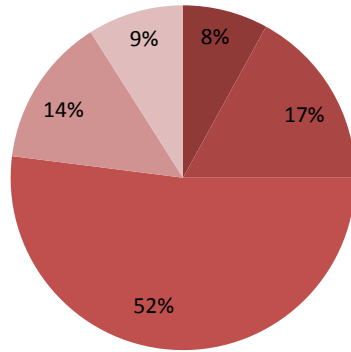


Figure 7. Educators who identify that they use novels, stories and poems by FNM authors.

To be effective in multicultural classrooms, teachers must relate teaching content to the cultural backgrounds of their students. Banks (2004) cautions, “classrooms must support the diversities of students by responding to each of their identities and by not stereotyping students according to uni-dimensional and narrow notions of who they are” (p. 363). Multicultural education approaches, he warns, have often been narrowly framed as only content integration of perspectives from various cultural groups. He suggests that this framework alone is not sufficient to address the interconnecting oppressions experienced by those who are marginalized by color, class and gender combined.

While teachers are working to include FNM perspectives, and they continue to say that they require support to find appropriate resources, they are working to ensure that what resources they have available to them are appropriate for use with their learners. Nearly half of respondents indicated that they are ensuring that resources are appropriate. The researchers wonder whether the respondents are basing their interpretations of what they deem as appropriate based on the “narrow notions” that Banks suggests.

■ Regularly ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Seldom ■ Never

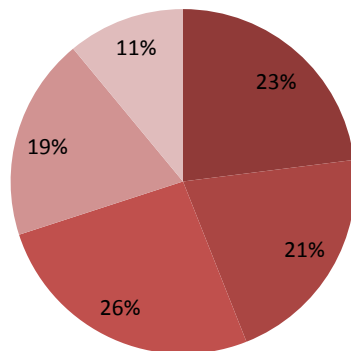


Figure 8. Educators who ensure that resources are appropriate.





CONCLUSION

This survey was designed to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of staff working in Saskatchewan school divisions towards support for improving FNM achievement in the province. In our view, the survey sample is too limited to provide a valid picture of attitudes and perceptions of the value of FNM education in the province of Saskatchewan. We would prefer to try again in another year with the aim of trying to capture greater participation rates.

While the sample is small it still provides a snapshot of perhaps an unwillingness or inability to fully participate in the provincial mandate for FNM education. We have had an over thirty year mandate in this province for:

- The inclusion of FNM content for K-12 education;
- The widespread access to accurate information about FNM peoples and communities for all learners;
- The inclusion of Elders and other community-based knowledge keepers as resources in our schools;
- The governance and partnership structures aimed at increasing parental and community involvement in schooling; and
- The requirements for educators to make sound decisions about the appropriate selection and use of material and human resources to aid learning.

The work of the Ministry of Education has been complimented by a number of other organizations including:

- The STF who has provided funding for teacher-led research, a resource library with materials and professional development supports
- The Office of the Treaty Commission has been offering university certificate training to all third year undergraduate education students, to school divisions province-wide and has provided the Treaty education kit to every single school in the province.

Yet recent provincial data continues to show students in schools are lagging behind on their knowledge of treaties, histories and contemporary issues of FNM peoples. Although we know that teachers do have a professional obligation to carry out provincial mandates, we can't hold teachers solely responsible for the outcomes of FNM learners. Ideally, boards of education, directors of education and superintendents, as well as principals all play crucial roles in implementing programs and mandates, and more importantly they create the will to improve instruction directed towards closing the achievement gap. It is important to recognize that the improvement of educational outcomes is simply unattainable without buy-in from teachers. How might divisions create a structure which allows buy-in to the provincial mandates?

This question will be addressed following the review of documents and policies. The remainder of this document will include the summary report, the identification of school divisions who are successfully addressing the achievement gap, recommendations for school division educational leaders and finally a statement about the diversity of boards of education.

SECTION II: A SUMMARY REPORT

A summary report addressing a framework with a consistent set of achievement measures that are the foundation for the sector.

BACKGROUND

There is an achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in Canada. In 2004 the Auditor General of Canada's report noted that since 2000 when the gap was identified no substantial improvements had been facilitated. In fact the 2004 report identified an increase in the gap between 2000 and 2004. The report stated:

We remain concerned that a significant education gap exists between First Nations people living on reserves and the Canadian population as a whole and that the time estimated to close this gap has increased slightly, from about 27 to 28 years.

Research in Aboriginal education in Canada has repeatedly referenced the achievement gap as one of Canada's most pressing concerns. Richards, Hove and Afalobi (2008) stated:

*While the Aboriginal student outcomes are better in provincial than in on-reserve schools, a large gap exists between performance of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in most schools across Canada. Understanding why the gap exists and what strategies can reduce it is among **the country's highest social policy priorities**. (Emphasis added by the researchers).*

The Canadian Council of Learning (2009) affirmed this idea:

The familiar and concerning statistics of low high-school completion rates remain an important part of the picture of Aboriginal learning. In 2006, 40% of Aboriginal people aged 20 to 24 did not have a high-school diploma, compared to 13% among non-Aboriginal Canadians. The rate was even higher for First Nations living on reserve (61%) and for Inuit living in remote communities (68%).

It has been widely accepted that there is a moral and economic imperative to address the high school completion rates of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) learners in Canada. Over the past thirty years provincial Ministries of Education have developed policies to support First Nations and Métis education. Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education has:

- Been working towards the inclusion of FNM content across the curriculum;
- Increased the hiring of FNM teachers and administrators;
- Developed policies;
- Developed FNM curriculum and resources; and
- Developed partnerships with FNM organizations.

In spite of these efforts, we really have not effectively addressed the achievement gap for FNM learners.





The SSBA requested the development of a report that would “address a framework with a consistent set of achievement measures that would form the foundation for the purposes of assessing progress in closing the gap in First Nations and Métis achievement in Saskatchewan.” This study is guided by the following questions:

- What are the achievement measures identified by Saskatchewan boards of education?
- How do these compare to the performance measures in other provinces with high Aboriginal student enrolments?
- How effectively are we addressing the need to close the achievement gap for FNM students in the province of Saskatchewan?

METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research study that utilized document analysis as its primary way of making sense of policies designed to address the achievement gap for FNM learners. This conceptual review (Stake, 2010) of documents is designed to provide a wide and deep gaze at initiatives from across Canada that may inform continued development to close the gap in this province. This conceptual review allows for a broad examination “to see the complexity of the professional problem” (p. 111).

This study included both a review of literature (scholarship, reports and technical papers) and a review of provincial policies, accountability structures, and performance indicators. The literature review provided a foundation for understanding the issues associated with closing the gap. The review of documents and the review of policies allowed for triangulation with the survey data. The review of policy documents provided a starting point for identifying the proposed common set of achievement measures requested by the SSBA.

From these two approaches the researcher will attempt to summarize common performance measures, identify unique achievement measures that might be adopted in Saskatchewan and determine benchmarking of our currently identified achievement measures.

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature began with a search for scholarship/reports from a variety of current sources. The researchers were interested in the following themes and topics:

- Closing the achievement gap for FNM students;
- Aboriginal education policy frameworks; and
- Topics associated with Aboriginal education.

As well they were interested in literature that informed Aboriginal educational policy development on topics of accountability; performance measures; and educational outcomes. Some of the literature reviewed included:

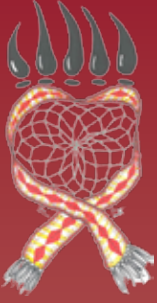
- Canadian Council of Learning documents on Aboriginal learning:
 - *Aboriginal Learning: A Review of Current Metrics of Success* (Tunison, 2007);
 - *Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning* (2007); and
 - *Aboriginal Student Achievement and Positive Learning Outcomes in Canadian Schools: Promising Practices* (Baker, for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2007).
- C.D. Howe Institute documents on Aboriginal education:
 - *Aboriginal Education in Quebec: A Benchmarking Exercise* (Richards, 2011); and
 - *Understanding the Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Achievement Gap in Student Performance: Lessons from BC* (Richards, Hove and Afalobi, 2008)
- Scholarly Articles on topics of policy frameworks on Aboriginal learning:
 - *Implications of Discourse: A Trilogy of Education Policy* (Cherubin, 2012);
 - *Ontario Ministry of Education Policy and Aboriginal Learners Epistemologies: A Fundamental Disconnect* (Cherubin and Hodson, 2008); and
 - *First Nations Education: Financial Accountability and Educational Attainment* (Carr-Stewart, 2006)

The review was helpful in understanding some of the ways in which provincial Ministries of Education are guided to address the achievement gap. Themes emerging from the review of literature are addressed in the following sections:

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

First Nations learners and the fiduciary responsibility of the Crown. It is not the intention of the researchers to be sidetracked by the jurisdictional quagmire that is FNM education in Canada, but one of the challenges to addressing who is responsible for FNM learners is rooted in our history. Carr-Stewart (2006)





provided an overview of the jurisdictional relationships which contribute to the achievement gap. She explains, “*The Constitution Act* established two systems of education in Canada: one provincial and the other federal” (p. 1001). The Treaty making process in Canada resulted in education being a Treaty right for First Nations peoples with the onus of fiduciary responsibility remaining with the federal government. The federal government maintains authority over band or reserve education, and yet the provincial government oversees education within its borders. The challenge becomes that this two-tier system of delivery has resulted in both funding gaps and achievement gaps for First Nations schools, and for FNM learners in all provinces. Carr-Stewart (2006) states, “Financial resources, policies, and practices, it is argued, are systemic issues that hinder First Nations school effectiveness and account, in part, for the educational attainment gap evident between First Nations’ students and students attending other educational systems” (p. 1001).

Mendelson (2008) exposes the contradictions that Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC; formerly Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) is at once financial responsible for providing funding to First Nations and at the same time has created and maintained a funding gap compared to the transfer payments allocated to provinces. Mendelson found that the department’s interpretation of their work to fund First Nations education in Canada is at odds with the reality of the allocations. On the one hand he claims that employees believe that they provide funding at a rate comparable to that received by provincial school divisions; yet in their own internal audit (2005) INAC reviewers clearly stated that First Nations schools received “\$5,500-7,500 per student; while the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Report identified that provincial schools received \$6,800-8,400 per student” (Mendelson, p. 10). Mendelson wrote:

A search of Department documents found no policy statement in which the Department committed itself to fund First Nations schools at a level which would permit provincial comparability (p. 9).

Mendelson identified the only policy reference was directed towards First Nations who entered into agreements with provincial schools divisions – the First Nations were required to provide tuition payments comparable to that which the provincial system received. At the same time, Mendelson noted that funding caps had been placed on educational funding while provincial costs per students increased during the same time period. So while the federal department required parity, they did not provide adequate funds to allow First Nations to meet their funding obligations for parity. This discrepancy was noted in the Auditor General of Canada’s report in 2004, and now years later the assertions of underfunding remain. While the federal Minister of AANDC maintains that they are not purposefully underfunding First Nations schools (Minister Duncan APTN news, Oct. 14, 2012), First Nations leaders strongly refute his claim.

AANDC retains a fiduciary responsibility to provide education to First Nations; however, the examination of the historically founded funding gap identified by Mendelson is telling of a system of oppression which has served to undermine progress for First Nations peoples and communities. However, this system of oppression seems to be lost in papers published by the C.D. Howe Institute and the Caledon Institute.

AN EVOLVING ENVIRONMENT: PROPOSED EDUCATION REFORM



Since 2008, the focus has shifted from the funding gap in FNM education to that of system-wide reforms in First Nations education, namely the development of a national *First Nations Education Act*, proposed by Mendelson. Mendelson also suggests that attempts to “professionalize school administration by the creation of Indian/First Nations education authorities with budgetary authority” (p. 116) are necessary to bring the First Nations structures of education in line with those more commonly used within each province. While Mendelson makes the suggestion that an *Act* would be beneficial, the federal government were already enacting these changes.

Haldane, Lafond and Krause (2013) explained that by 2008 the federal government had already implemented educational reforms which included: results based accountability, partnerships and provincial comparability. These reforms included the development of the First Nations Student Success Program (2008) which provided local educational authorities (tribal councils in the case of Saskatchewan) with funding to create baseline measures of achievement in reading, writing and numeracy. These three-year funding proposals have effectively implemented the nationwide reforms suggested by Mendelson, and later affirmed by Haldane, Lafond and Krause.

Haldane, Lafond and Krause reiterate the need for a national *First Nations Education Act* which is child-centered, and respects the child’s right to culture, language and identity. These panel members recommend the use of “regional First Nations Education Organizations” to guide planning, and provide supports for learning and achievement at the local level. They also recommend “statutory funding that is needs-based, sustainable and used specifically for education purposes” (introduction).

While this is a new reform strategy it does not really address the problem of systemic underfunding addressed by Mendelson, the Auditor General and others. One may pause to wonder whether adding a new level to the bureaucracy will in fact help address the educational attainment outcomes that were originally driving the reforms. Another critical question is how do these reform efforts reflect the aspirations of FNM peoples as expressed in other research on culturally responsive schooling, Indigenous education, and other themes. Some of these ideas are explored in the following section.

DEFINING SUCCESS: IN OUR OWN WORDS

The question of how to close the achievement gap for FNM learners in Canada has been approached in a number of key ways, such as the suggestion to create a national *First Nations Education Act* and the development of First Nations boards of education as introduced above. Assessment and accountability frameworks can also reflect “indigenous views grounded in local cultural ontologies” (Tibbetts and Faircloth, 2008, p. 153). These types of culturally responsive assessment are another strategy following in the traditions of culturally responsive schooling and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002).



FNMI peoples in Canada have played an active role in determining culturally specific, locally developed curriculum and language programs meant to enhance the retention of students. FNMI educational leaders have recognized the need for culturally responsive assessment tools to better identify what is working in First Nations schooling. Certainly, FNMI educational leaders are not immune to the growing pressure to participate in federally imposed assessment programs (First Nations Student Success Program) nor are they ignorant to the widespread adoption of provincial assessment strategies that inform both local and national indicators reports. But many wish to maintain the authority to determine for themselves what “success” means within the framework of their local communities.

In the spring of 2007 the Canadian Council on Learning undertook a series of national consultations aimed at determining three models for Holistic Lifelong Learning as originally proposed in the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (CCL, 2007). These models were generated collectively by First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) peoples and organizations. They were grounded on some key attributes of Aboriginal learning which included:

- Learning is holistic;
- Learning is a lifelong process;
- Learning is experiential in nature;
- Learning is rooted in Aboriginal languages and cultures;
- Learning is spiritually oriented;
- Learning is a communal activity, involving family, community and Elders; and
- Learning is an integration of Aboriginal and Western knowledge. (CCL 2007, p. 5)

The authors assert that current practices in assessment of achievement are “oriented toward measuring learning deficits” (p. 8). The author’s state, “Western culture typically uses graduation and attendance rates as measures of success, whereas some of the culturally appropriate learning outcomes expressed by FNMI include measures of ancestral language efficacy and exposure to festivals and ceremonies” (p. 13). Tunison (2007) echoed these observations in his report for the Canadian Council of Learning’s Aboriginal Knowledge Centre. He stated, “typically, Western society considers a learner to have been successful if he or she has completed kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education in a reasonable length of time, has fulfilled a significant measure of his or her potential, and seeks to further learning when necessary to achieve a particular level of economic and social well-being” (p. 9). Tunison suggests that metrics of success need to expand beyond these Western ideals to embrace that which has been determined to be important to the viability of FNMI peoples and communities.

The *Redefining How Success is Measured* document from the CCL suggests that a very different view of assessment needs to be explored which reflects the “full spectrum of lifelong learning; reflects the holistic nature of FNMI learning; and reflects the importance of experiential learning” (p. 8). The CCL poses three holistic life-long learning models based on FNMI cultures. They suggest that while there are currently no national holistic models for assessing learning the

lifelong learning model could provide a starting point for the discussion. They assert that models of assessing the achievement of FNMI learners must be culturally relevant, embrace a holistic approach to lifelong learning and allow for the measurement of progress over time.

Tunison (2007), also contracted by the CCL, takes a slightly different approach to “success.” He suggests a “balanced assessment system” to document not only summative assessment or assessment of learning, but also formative assessment or assessment for learning (Tunison, p. 8). Formative assessment is ongoing and facilitates the teacher “continuously adjusting instruction based on the results of classroom assessments” (p. 8). This balanced approach would not only be teacher driven but would also include the learner in the process. In recognition of life-long learning, the balanced assessment model would include elements of the learners own self-reflection on learning (Erlandson, 2009, p. 34 and p. 96). Erlandson suggests that learners must be involved in the development and selection of assessment strategies and using assessment strategies both for self and peer review. She claims that this inclusive approach builds confidence and motivation for the learner.

Tunison attempts to define success through the lens of the five animation theme bundles (ATBs) identified by the CCL (2007). The ATBs include:

- Comprehending the learning spirit/identity in and through learning units (family, community, peers, etc.);
- Aboriginal language learning;
- Diverse educational systems and learning;
- Pedagogy of professionals and practitioners in learning; and
- Technology and learning.

He continues by engaging in a review of information used to inform the indicators and measures currently used to support each of the ATBs. Some highlights of Tunison’s (2007) report are included below (the research explores four of the six ATBs):

- Comprehending the learning spirit/identity in and through learning units (family, community, peers, etc.) – “success...is typically seen through the lens of protecting and reclaiming language, culture, and tradition while focusing on goals such as graduation and transitions to work and post-secondary institutions...” (p. 12).
- Aboriginal language learning – Tunison suggests that “the establishment, implementation and assessment of policies related to Aboriginal languages could also be benchmarked and assessed as markers of progress toward success” (p. 16)
- Diverse educational systems – these can be interpreted as meaning partnerships between provincial divisions and First Nations; funding equity; programs which aid in transitions between the First Nations and mainstream delivery systems; “a rigorous and relevant educational curricula, programs and teaching materials” (p. 18); and active parental involvement in schooling and the recruitment of Aboriginal educators by divisions. The last factor supporting the ATBs is the use of the following instructional practices: storytelling, experiential learning, cooperative





learning, constructivist orientation, teacher demonstrations and role modeling, and positive constructive feedback (p. 20).

- Pedagogy of professionals and practitioners in learning – a variety of means are noted that facilitate the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal professionals including: human resource policies for affirmative action; recruitment efforts to attract a diverse workforce; and training programs designed to prepare professionals for the field (ITEP, SUNTEP etc.).

Tunison admits that there is no quantitative foundation for the development of indicators and measurements which could be universally applied. He suggests that focused inquiry on the ATBs in relation to the development of a model to assess success is required in order to posit a model which is balanced.

RESEARCHERS REMARKS

The researchers acknowledge the role that assessment plays in initiating system-wide changes, especially in regard to closing the achievement gap for First Nations learners. Certainly, while a sense of urgency has been created and policies have been developed these public policy reforms must be viewed not as an end in themselves, but as a work in progress. The creation of a national tool for assessing learning which is culturally relevant may be a long way off yet. In the meantime, we will all “muddle through” the next few years as baseline data is gathered on achievement, and as we begin to identify what is best practice locally.

We caution against placing too much emphasis only on provincial achievement scores as doing so ignores the aspirations of First Nations individuals and communities who may desire a different sort of reporting on “success.” We believe that continued work on partnership development may provide divisions with an avenue for gaining additional insight into how FNM peoples view “success” and “achievement.”

A REVIEW OF CANADIAN POLICY

Closing the achievement gap for FNMI learners in Canada has been a pressing policy concern. Every province and territory in Canada now has an extensive policy framework to support FNMI education. These policy frameworks support curriculum renewal, assessment for learning, partnership development, funding and accountability.

The document review included the identification of policy for each provincial Ministry of Education in Canada. The researchers identified policy frameworks and associated documents to support FNMI education. The researcher aimed to get a better understanding of the interconnecting components of these policies and how they worked together to guide educational leaders in reporting on progress. The researcher narrowed the search to British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. These provinces as well as Saskatchewan had the highest populations of Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Table 1). Based on the population, the researcher focused the search to these provinces under the assumption that they would likely be more responsive to creating policies to support FNMI education.

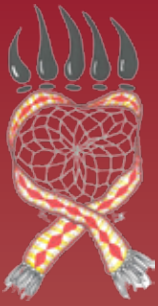
Province	Aboriginal Population
Ontario	242,495*
British Columbia	196,075*
Alberta	188,365*
Manitoba	175,395*
Saskatchewan	141,890*
Quebec	108,425*
Nunavut	24,915
Nova Scotia	24,175
Newfoundland/Labrador	23,455
Northwest Territories	20,635
New Brunswick	17,650
Yukon	7,580
Prince Edward Island	1,730

Table 1. Aboriginal populations by province (Census: Aboriginal Statistics at a Glance, 2010 – based on Census 2006 data. *Provinces to be included in the document analysis)

The researchers reviewed sixteen foundational documents from four provinces (Ontario – 3; British Columbia – 4; Alberta – 5; Saskatchewan – 4). This level of the review included identifying when the policy frameworks were established. The purpose of each foundational document was noted as were the identified performance measures, and the partnership relationships which informed the document design.

The researcher then reviewed several school divisions' policies to gain a deeper understanding of the practice of closing the gap in these divisions (Summary Report: Section 3). The researchers examined four randomly selected school divisions within each province to determine the structures for reporting and to





pinpoint provincial performance measures in action (except in Saskatchewan where three divisions were selected and an additional division was reviewed in the section on higher achieving school divisions). Lastly, the researcher examined randomly selected school plans in Saskatchewan to determine the “theory in action” (Elmore, 2004).

This approach to document analysis provides a wide and deep gaze of the policy structures in the four provinces. From this data the researcher will identify the specific performance measures and indicators that may frame a recommendation for divisions in Saskatchewan. These recommendations for a framework will be presented at the end of the document.

ONTARIO

The Government of Ontario’s policy *Ontario’s New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs* (2005) “envisions prosperous and healthy Aboriginal communities that will create a better future for Aboriginal children and youth. The *New Approach* commits government to working with Aboriginal leaders and organizations to improve education outcomes among Aboriginal students.” The *New Approach* filters through the different departments of the provincial government, and the Ministry of Education aligns its policies with this new approach.

Aboriginal education is one of the key priorities for the Ontario Ministry of Education. The goals of the Ministry of Education include: to improve achievement and graduation rates, improve retention, and close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy by 2016 . The provincial policy and associated documents are identified below:

- *The Ontario FNMI Education Policy Framework* (2007);
- *Building Bridges to Success for FNMI Students* (2007); and
- *Sound Foundations for the Road Ahead: Fall 2009 Progress Report*.

Each of the frameworks/policy documents will be presented below.

THE ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK (2007)

The Ontario policy framework has three goals. For each goal performance measures are identified. Each performance measure is followed by strategies. Strategies are targeted to the Ministry, boards of education and schools. Boards of education and schools are expected to use the framework as a starting point only. Schools will develop their own locally developed targets. The section below outlines the three goals, performance measures and strategies.

Goal One: High Level of Student Achievement

Performance Measure:

- Significant increase in the percentage of FNMI students meeting provincial standards on province-wide assessments in reading, writing and mathematics; and
- Significant increase in the number of FNMI teaching and non-teaching staff in school boards across Ontario.

Strategies:

- Strategy 1.1 – Build capacity for effective teaching, assessment and evaluation practices; and
- Strategy 1.2 – Promote system effectiveness, transparency and responsiveness.

Goal Two: Reduce Gaps in Student Achievement

Performance Measures:

- Significant increase in the graduation rates of FNMI students;
- Significant improvement in FNMI student achievement;
- Significant improvement in FNMI students' self-esteem;
- Increased collaboration between First Nations education authorities and school boards; and
- Increased satisfaction among educators in provincially funded schools with respect to targeted professional development and resources designed to help them serve FNMI students more effectively.

Strategies:

- Strategy 2.1 – Enhance support to improve literacy and numeracy skills; and
- Strategy 2.2 – Provide additional support in a variety of areas to reduce gaps in student outcomes.

Goal Three: High Level of Public Confidence

Performance Measures:

- Increased participation of FNMI parents in the education of their children;
- Increased opportunities for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and issue resolution among Aboriginal communities, First Nations governments and education authorities, school, school boards, and the Ministry; and
- Integration of educational opportunities to significantly improve the knowledge of all students and educators in Ontario about the rich culture and histories of FNMI peoples.

Strategies:

- Strategy 3.1 – Build educational leadership capacity and coordination;
- Strategy 3.2 – Build capacity to support identity building, including the appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures by all students, school boards staff, and elected trustees; and
- Strategy 3.3 – Foster supportive and engaged families and communities.





BUILDING BRIDGES TO SUCCESS FOR FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT STUDENTS (2007)

This guide was designed to support divisions in developing Aboriginal self-identification policies and practices and data collection methodologies. The ministry recognized that divisions would need support to be able determine Aboriginal learners prior to being able to expect divisions to report on the performance measures specific to Aboriginal learners. The ministry also provided funding and advice to boards as they developed self-identification policies.

SOUND FOUNDATIONS FOR THE ROAD AHEAD: FALL 2009 PROGRESS REPORT

In 2007 the Ministry of Education “committed to reporting publicly on implementation progress every three years.” The 2009 Progress Report was designed to communicate to the public the success of the implementation of the framework since 2007. The Ministry of Education provided monies to Aboriginal organizations to host community feedback sessions on the framework; StonePath Research Group was hired by the Ministry to organize focus groups and online surveys; and boards of education directed their Aboriginal education offices to gather data. The report provides an overview of steps taken to date, and is not intended to be evaluative. Two key findings included: The need for additional teaching resource materials to support learning activities in the classroom; and the importance of recruiting and retaining Aboriginal personnel who are focussed on supporting FNMI students.

For the purposes of this report the ten performance measures (Ontario FNMI Education Policy Framework, 2007) are presented in four categories, they include:

- Using Data to Support Student Achievement;
- Supporting Students;
- Supporting Educators; and
- Engagement and Awareness Building.

Using Data to Support Student Achievement

- Aboriginal student self-identification policy:
 - As of June 2009, 28 boards had approved self-identification policies, and 41 boards had begun the process of consultation and policy development. Gathering data is viewed as imperative to establishing a baseline of indicators on enrolment, achievement and effectiveness.
- Teacher self-identification:
 - The Ontario College of Teachers began discussions with its members to both encourage members to self-identify and to recruit more FNMI students to the teaching profession.

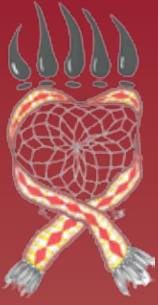
Supporting Students

- Student self esteem:
 - All sources reported having Aboriginal counsellors, liaison workers and role models in schools has had a positive effect and has contributed to a sense of belonging for students.
- Collaboration Between First Nations and boards of education:
 - Since the launch of the framework, boards have reported a shift in the perceived quality of their relationships with First Nations.
- Tuition Agreements and Funding:
 - As of January 2009, 20+ boards had tuition agreements with First Nations; and
 - Differences in funding approaches (level of \$) between the federal and provincial governments was reported as a consistent problem. Specifically, there is a significant gap between the provincial funding for school boards and the level of funding provided to First Nations by the federal government through the Band-Operated Funding Formula.
- Transition Support:
 - Boards reported having structures in place to support transitions for First Nations students coming to board schools. Some approaches included: having an Aboriginal education coordinator; setting up advisory committees; establishing transition programs, peer mentoring programs and after school programs; making use of transition kits and outreach activities; and expanding services for students and their families.
- Community Advisory Committees:
 - 40% of boards that participated in the survey reported that they had established an Aboriginal Advisory Committee. These committees reported that FNMI students were more engaged – attendance had improved and they showed more confidence in their communications;
 - Intervention teams had been established;
 - Student support programs had been established (breakfast program, leadership workshops, transition kits); and
 - Student and family celebration activities were implemented.



Supporting Educators

- Even though boards had established professional development, teaching staff cited the need for more classroom resources, support materials, lesson plans, kits, games and more money for professional development.
- The lack of access to native studies and native language courses were identified as a cause for concern.



Engagement and Awareness Building

- Schools continue to report high levels of FNMI awareness activities where the population of FNMI students is higher
- Deepening the awareness for all students is essential
- Family engagement in governance (self-identification policy), though many participants reported poverty and mobility as two limiting factors to high level of participation.
- Agencies that were consulted reported that Aboriginal youth with non-Aboriginal parents/guardians were a special concern.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Like Ontario, British Columbia (BC) has created a series of policies to address achievement, assessment and the learning outcomes of FNMI learners. The BC Ministry of Education policies include:

- *The Accountability Framework (2002);*
- *K-12 Funding – Aboriginal Education;*
- *Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements;* and
- *BC: Achievement Contracts.*

Each of these policy frameworks will be explored in more detail in the following sections.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK (2002)

...reflects a public commitment to improve student results. The Accountability Framework includes: Annual School Plans developed by School Planning Councils, Achievement Contracts supported by Aboriginal Enhancement Agreements, Superintendents of Achievements, and District Reviews.

The Accountability Framework formalizes the board of education responsibility for improving student achievement. Each school and school board will develop plans for improvement. Boards of education, schools and the Ministry of Education will monitor progress towards improving student performance and will report these results to parents and the community. Implementation may differ from school district to school district. This document introduces the interconnecting components of the accountability framework.

Achievement Contracts detail the specific goals individual boards of education have set to enhance student achievement. In this document student achievement includes intellectual, human and social development, and career development. These contracts reflect the unique characteristics, priorities and needs of each district. Achievement contracts are reviewed by School Planning Councils.

School Planning Councils consist of the principal, a teacher, three parents and one student in Grades 10, 11 or 12, where applicable. They will examine how well their students are performing and develop an annual plan for their school that includes goals and outcomes for improvement.

Ministry of Education appointed superintendents of achievement meet with district superintendents at least once a year to discuss district efforts to support student achievement, planning for the future, and provide professional expertise and support to districts. They also support capacity building at the provincial and other levels, as well as monitoring district planning and results.

District Review Teams may be used to focus on improving student achievement through school and district planning. Teams may include parents, teachers, other school district staff (including principals and other administrators) and Ministry of Education staff.



K-12 FUNDING – ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

This policy is one component of the integrated series of policies aimed at supporting FNM education in the province of BC. The K-12 funding document, the Enhancement Agreements, Achievement Contracts and School Plans all provide an integrated system meant to address closing the achievement gap for FNM learners. The Ministry of Education provides enhanced funding to school age students of Aboriginal ancestry. Enhanced funding provides culturally appropriate educational programs and services to support the success of Aboriginal students.

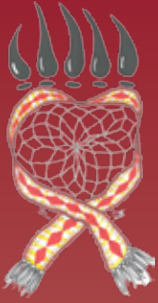
Targeted Aboriginal education funding requires the collaboration of boards of education and local Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver Aboriginal education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture and/or language. Funds provided to boards of education for Aboriginal education programs are targeted and must be spent on the provision of these programs and services. The delivery and outcomes of Aboriginal programs and services must be documented, preferably through the Enhancement Agreements.

Funded Aboriginal education programs must be additional to any other programs and services to which an Aboriginal student is eligible, including provincial base funding, English Language Learning and special education. Targeted Aboriginal education funding must not be used for the delivery of provincial curriculum.

Aboriginal ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification. School districts report students of Aboriginal ancestry using a standardized form. School districts report students participating in Aboriginal education programs and services. Students who are status First Nations living on reserve and who are receiving an education program offered by a public school in a school district should be reported.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENTS

The Accountability Framework and the K-12 Funding Framework as well as the *Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements (AEEA)* provide an integrated framework in the province of BC. The AEEA is a working agreement between a school district, all local Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education designed to enhance the educational achievements of Aboriginal students. The



AEEA establishes a collaborative partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts that involves shared decision-making and specific goal setting to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students.

AEEA highlight the importance of academic performance and, more importantly, stress the integral nature of Aboriginal traditional culture and languages to Aboriginal student development and success. Fundamental to AEEA is the requirement that school districts provide strong programs on the culture of local Aboriginal peoples on whose traditional territories the districts are located.

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements are currently signed with 47 school districts in BC, as of January 2012. Ten school districts have published their shared practices documents in order to create a common understanding of some of the approaches taken to develop and meet the targets of their specific AEEA goals.

BC ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACTS

The fourth component of this integrated network of policies is the Achievement Contracts. The Achievement Contracts represent school districts “public commitment to improving student achievement.” School districts are required to report on enrolments, graduation rates, and progress made in improving literacy and numeracy and other indicators. In BC, 60 Achievement Contracts (2012/13) are available on the Ministry of Education website.

These policies form one integrated policy web to support accountability in relation to Aboriginal learning outcomes. These policies do not appear to be integrated and divisions have regularly scheduled timelines for the submission and publication of these documents. It appears that while there are some common aspects to the frameworks, each document takes on a local flavor informed by the community partnerships that school districts establish with FNM groups.

While the examination of BC provided a very good example of culturally responsive planning at the heart of the design the researchers wonder if it is enough to close the gap on achievement given the timelines established by this provincial Ministry and by the school districts. Perhaps some clues lie in the examination of the other provinces’ responses to accountability.

ALBERTA

In 2000, the Government of Alberta released *Strengthening Relationships: The Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Policy Framework*. All government branches including Alberta Education followed up with their own policy frameworks. Alberta Education developed the following policy frameworks and documents to support FNMI learners:

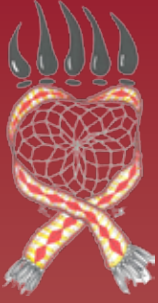
- *Alberta Education Business Plan (2011-14)*;
- *Budget 2010: Striking the Balance Education Business Plan (2010-2013)*;
- *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2002)*; and
- *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework Progress Reports*.

The province of Alberta asserts, “The assessment of FNM learner achievement will be enhanced with the development of improved performance measures.” This provincial ministry is working from the assumption that improved measures and indicators are necessary. The Ministry ties access to information to the ability of stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of program expenditures and program effectiveness. The Ministry desires educators to be able to continue initiatives that demonstrate positive results for learning while making informed decisions about what to change about how they deliver academic programming. They continue by identifying the following measuring goals and performance measures.

Measuring Goal One: High quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, accessible, and affordable to the learner.

- Current and/or potential performance measures:
 - Percentage of teachers and instructors satisfied with the number and type of Aboriginal specific language, learning and teaching resources, and support services;
 - Number of available Aboriginal-specific scholarship and bursary awards, and number of applicants for these awards;
 - Percentage of FNMI high school students, parents and other community representatives satisfied with the quality of the basic education system, including FNMI language learning and teaching resources;
 - Percentage of FNMI adults satisfied with the quality of the adult learning system; and
 - Level of participation of First Nations, Métis or Inuit people in governance activities (i.e. involvement on parent councils, boards of education, post-secondary boards, provincial education committees, task forces and school administration).





Measuring Goal Two: Excellence in learner achievement.

- Current and/or potential performance measures:
 - Number and percentage of FNMI students enrolled at the provincial and school division levels; and
 - Number and percentage of FNMI students writing provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.

ALBERTA EDUCATION BUSINESS PLAN (2011-14)

As a result of the ministry's review of its goals, environment, opportunities and challenges, a number of priority initiatives have been identified. Only those goals which are pertinent to a review of FNMI learning are identified.

Goal One: Success for every student

- The outcomes are that students demonstrate proficiency in literacy and numeracy, students achieve outcomes, and students are prepared for the 21st century.

Goal Three: Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students

- The outcomes are that FNMI students are engaged in learning and that the achievement gap between FNMI and non-FNMI students is eliminated.

BUDGET 2010: STRIKING THE BALANCE EDUCATION BUSINESS PLAN (2010-2013)

Alberta Education recognizes:

The achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students remains an issue. The dropout rate for Aboriginal students in Alberta is more than double the dropout rate of students overall. A growing, young Aboriginal population provides a unique opportunity to explore innovative ways to improve Aboriginal educational attainment in Alberta. Successful students are more likely to gain employment, continue on to further education, and become leaders who can have a positive impact on their local communities, throughout the province and beyond (p. 68).

The Government of Alberta aims to provide high quality learning experiences and supports that enable learning for FNMI students. The Budget 2010 document states:

The ministry will work collaboratively with First Nations and the federal government to enable equitable educational opportunities for all First Nations students. The ministry supports First Nations, Métis and Inuit student success by raising awareness of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student their unique needs; developing culturally relevant learning resources and programming opportunities; focusing on continuous improvement through appropriate accountability mechanisms; and working collaboratively with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities (p. 3)

Alberta Education outcomes are:

First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are well-prepared for citizenship, the workplace and postsecondary education and training; and Key learning outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students improve.

This document identifies strategies and performance measures which include:

(Strategy) Assist school authorities to develop collaborative frameworks that will engage local First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and parents in the planning and implementation of strategies focused on improving student success.

(Strategy) Work collaboratively with partners, including First Nations and Métis leadership, the federal government, other Government of Alberta Ministries, and education stakeholders to improve student learning opportunities and support student achievement.

(Strategy) Improve access to learning opportunities, resources, community to school transitions, and support services for on-reserve First Nations students and Métis students who reside on settlements.

(Strategy) Enhance the attributes, skills and knowledge of teachers about First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture and contemporary issues to support the learning of all students.

(Strategy) Increase the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers.

Performance Measures:

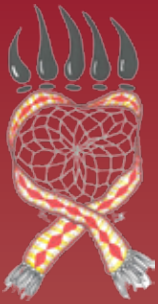
- Reduction in the dropout rate for FNMI learners ages 14-18;
- Increase in the percentages of FNMI learners who achieve the acceptable standard in social studies, mathematics, and chemistry 30 and physics 30;
- Increase in high school transition to post-secondary within six years of starting Grade 10;
- Increase in high school completion rate within five years of starting Grade 10;
- Increase in participation in active citizenship; and
- FNMI students are taught the attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work.

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK (2002)

The development of this policy framework was a joint effort that maximized the potential of the partnerships that existed between Elders, Alberta Education, and the Native Education Policy Review Advisory Committee. The Native Education Policy Review Advisory Committee had members from three Treaty areas, FNMI organizations and other organizations throughout Alberta. The review process engaged 5,000 participants from across the province. The intention was to review the original FNMI Education Policy with the intention of renewing the framework. The result of the review is a renewed vision for Alberta Education:

The life-long learning aspirations and potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals and communities are realized through a responsive and accountable public education system that is recognized as a provincial leader in Aboriginal education (p. 9).





There are several goals and strategies for the revised policy framework:

- (Goal) High quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, accessible, and affordable to the learner:
 - Strategy 1: Increase the quantity and quality of FNMI curriculum, language, learning and teaching resources.
 - Strategy 2: Increase the availability of relevant K-12 and post-secondary education information resources and services for FNMI learners, parents and communities.
 - Strategy 3: Encourage FNMI participation in governance structures in school jurisdictions and post-secondary institutions.
 - Strategy 4: Create mechanisms and consultative processes to improve FNMI learner success.
 - Strategy 5: Increase FNMI learner access to post-secondary and other adult training opportunities and support services.
 - Strategy 6: Ensure financial need is not a barrier to FNMI learner participation.

- (Goal) Excellence in learner achievement:
 - Strategy 1: Increase the attendance, retention and graduation rates of FNMI learners.
 - Strategy 2: Increase the number of FNMI teachers and school/ institutional personnel.
 - Strategy 3: Increase awareness and knowledge and understanding of FNMI history, lands, rights, languages, cultures, and contemporary perspectives on governance, education, science, wellness and other issues.
 - Strategy 4: Facilitate the continuous development and delivery of FNMI courses and professional development opportunities for aspiring and existing administrators, teachers/instructors and school/institution personnel.
 - Strategy 5: Improve mechanisms to measure FNMI learner success.
 - Strategy 6: Improve the assessment of FNMI learner achievement.

- (Goal) Learners are well-prepared for participation in post-secondary studies and the labour market:
 - Strategy 1: Increase literacy opportunities for FNMI children and adults.
 - Strategy 2: Support arrangements to increase FNMI learner enrolment in post-secondary programs of study.
 - Strategy 3: Increase the linkages between education and employment for FNMI learners.
 - Strategy 4: Work with stakeholders to provide relevant career and labour market information resources and services to FNMI learners, parents and communities.

- (Goal) Effective working relationships:
 - Strategy 1: Establish mechanisms to increase FNMI participation in policy development, decision-making, accountability, and issue resolution.
 - Strategy 2: Build working relationships that will contribute to quality learning opportunities for FNMI learners.
 - Strategy 3: Identify and reduce barriers to FNMI learner success.
- (Goal) Highly responsive and responsible Ministry:
 - Strategy 1: Enhance performance measurement, performance assessment and results reporting.
 - Strategy 2: Improve ministry coordination and capacity to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges associated with issues of importance to FNMI people.
 - Strategy 3: Improve communication practices with FNMI communities and organizations.
 - Strategy 4: Improve ministry awareness and understanding of FNMI history, lands, rights, languages and cultures.



SASKATCHEWAN

For the past 30 years a number of provincial policies have been implemented to support First Nations and Métis educational advancement in the province. These include:

- *The First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework (1989)*;
- *The Continuous Improvement and Accountability Framework*;
- *Inspiring Success: Building Toward Student Achievement (2009)*; and
- *The First Nations and Métis Education Planning Guide* (no year provided).

THE FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK (1989)

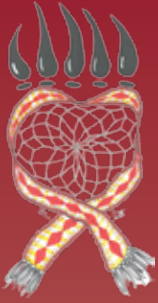
The purpose this framework was to guide educators to integrate FNM content across all curriculum areas, Kindergarten to Grade 12.

THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (Nov. 2011)

The purpose of this framework is to increase the achievement of all learners in the province and to eliminate the achievement gap for FNM students. The Continuous Improvement Framework (CIF) or Continuous Improvement and Accountability Framework (CIAF) as it is more recently known has set four provincial priorities:

- Higher Literacy and Achievement;
- Equitable Outcomes for All;
- Smooth Transitions; and
- System Accountability and Governance.

Key to all four provincial priorities is concern for closing the gap on achievement for FNM learners.



The CIAF directs boards of education to prepare, approve and make available to the public a three-year Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The plan outlines a description of the school division, identifies priorities, SMART goals, strategies, resource allocations and outcomes. The CIP must also identify initiatives undertaken to support FNM learners in the school division. An essential first task for boards of education is to ensure that they have a policy in place to allow for self-declaration, and that tracking of FNM students in the areas of literacy, numeracy and graduation rates are recorded and reported on.

INSPIRING SUCCESS: BUILDING TOWARD STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (2009)

The purpose of this policy “is to guide strategic actions across all levels of the provincial education system” (p. 6). The intention of the policy is to identify goals, indicators and strategies “that will support significant improvement in student achievement for all learners” (p. 6). The vision of this policy framework is to create:

A provincial education system that foundationally places First Nations and Métis ways of knowing in the learning program to create a culturally responsive education system that benefits all learners (p. 15).

The policy is intended to extend and focus the work of addressing FNM achievement as outlined in the CIAF and *The First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework*. This policy identifies key foundational understandings for FNM education that include:

- First Nations and Métis Ways of Knowing:
 - This includes mandatory Treaty education (K-12);
 - The infusion of First Nations and Métis content across Grade level and subject area;
 - The use of traditional pedagogies; and
 - The facilitation of cultural competency development for all learners (learning multiple ways of knowing).
- Indigenous Knowledge:
 - This works from the understanding that Indigenous knowledge is “inherently tied to the land”;
 - Has content and meaning which is local; and
 - Knowledge is transmitted in the context in which you live based on ceremony, story, and experience.
- Support the growth of culturally competency for all learners to respect and understand First Nations and Métis worldviews.

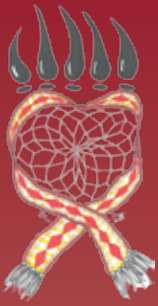
This policy is centred on a conceptual framework for FNM education. This framework was informed by the vision of Elder Alma Kytwayhat. The Framework poses a White Birch Tree model (p. 13) which is superimposed with a Medicine Wheel. For a deeper description please see the policy framework. The four policy goals include:

- 1) Equitable outcomes for FNM learners;
- 2) All learners to have knowledge and appreciation of the unique contributions of FNM peoples in Saskatchewan;
- 3) Data collection and reporting on measures outlined in *The First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework* that demonstrate accountability towards improving educational outcomes;
- 4) Shared management of the provincial education system by promoting and sustaining partnerships with FNM peoples at the provincial and local level (p. 16).

This policy, like the CIAF, is framed to ensure accountability for boards of education. Boards of education will be asked to identify specific indicators under each policy goal. Each of the four goals will be identified, followed by a description of intent, and the indicators. Please see more details below:

- 1) Equitable Outcomes for First Nations and Métis learners – Improved educational achievement for First Nations and Métis learners with no gap between FNM learners and non-Aboriginal learners in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention and graduation rates, and transitions to post-secondary education or employment.
 - a) Indicators – Boards of education will collect and report data on:
 - i. The number of professional development opportunities offered to all staff in relation to FNM history and ways of knowing;
 - ii. The number and types of FNM language/cultural programs offered;
 - iii. Graduation rates for FNM students;
 - iv. FNM students not enrolled in schools;
 - v. The average teacher assigned marks in specific subject areas for FNM students;
 - vi. The % of FNM students reaching proficient outcomes on the Assessment for Learning Grade 4 Reading Assessment;
 - vii. The % of FNM students reaching proficient outcomes on the Assessment for Learning Grade 8 Mathematics Assessment;
 - viii. The % of FNM students achieving standards of excellent and sufficient on the Assessment for Learning Opportunity to Learn Measures in Grade 4 Reading and Grade 8 Math Assessments;
 - ix. The % of FNM children enrolled in school division operated early learning programs such as Pre-K;
 - x. Research conducted by school divisions with a focus on promising practices for improved outcomes for FNM learners.





- 2) All learners have knowledge and appreciation of the unique contributions of FNM peoples in Saskatchewan. All learners will have foundational understanding that we are all beneficiaries of Treaty, and of Métis peoples' contributions to the development of the Canadian West, including their traditional settlement areas in Saskatchewan.
 - a) Indicators: Boards of education will collect and report data on:
 - i. The actualization of FNM content, perspectives and ways of knowing in curriculum;
 - ii. The % of students reaching a score of 80% or higher on the Knowledge and Understanding of Treaties assessment;
 - iii. The number of school divisions that have developed anti-racist policies; and
 - iv. The number of professional development opportunities offered to teachers that specifically address the actualization of FNM content, perspectives and ways of knowing in curriculum subject areas.
- 3) Data collection and reporting on measures outlined in *The First Nations and Métis Education Policy Framework* that demonstrates accountability towards educational outcomes. All provincial school divisions will develop and report on plans that demonstrate accountability and continuous improvement for FNM education.
 - a) Indicators: Boards of education will collect and report data on:
 - i. FNM education plans as a part of each school divisions' CIP, including clearly identified goals and outcomes;
 - ii. FNM student self-identification and the disaggregation of student data; and
 - iii. Representative workforce across the education sector.
- 4) Shared management of the provincial education system by partnering with FNM peoples at the provincial and local levels. Partnerships will exist between provincial school divisions and FNM organizations that create opportunities for shared decision making and high quality supports for all learners.
 - a) Indicators: Boards of education will collect and report data on:
 - i. Partnerships between FNM jurisdictions and provincial school divisions reporting on the:
 1. Number of existing partnerships across the partnership;
 2. Levels of shared decision making within each partnership;
 3. Number of reciprocal education service agreements; and
 4. Level of engagement of First Nations and Métis educators, parents, family and community members.
 - ii. The number of School Community Councils that are representative of community demographics;
 - iii. The number of board of education members that are representative of community and provincial demographics.

The purpose of this document is to assist planning suggested in the *Inspiring Success* policy explored above. The FNM Education Plan provides a guide for boards of education as they begin the process of reporting to the Ministry of Education on initiatives undertaken to address FNM achievement. The FNM Education Plans are expected to be made public. In some cases, we found that school divisions combined the CIP and the FNM Education Plan into one document (more on that later).

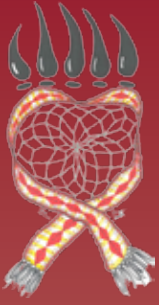
RESEARCHER REMARKS

Under the *Constitution Act* a two-tiered system of education was created: the federal system for on-reserve Indians; and the provincial system for everyone else. Remarkably each province has replicated key components in the evolution of policy reform. Each Ministry of Education has created an integrated and complex system of accountability frameworks aimed at improving learning. They have addressed the need to secure reliable self-declaration data as a starting point for data disaggregation regarding the assessment of achievement for FNM learners. BC, Alberta and Ontario have created self-identification policies to aid in the process of determining accurate numbers of FNMI learners. *The Building Bridges to Success* document from Ontario provides one promising model that also addresses the need for partnership development suggested by the school effectiveness literature. Saskatchewan has not followed suit; they have relied on the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission Education Equity Reporting which since 1985 has gathered and reported this data. We would strongly suggest that a Ministry-driven policy on self-declaration and an accompanying communications strategy might help educators to ascertain accurate numbers of learners across our province.

This enrolment data is an essential starting point for addressing the achievement gap. In BC and now in Saskatchewan accurate enrolment data can allow the division to access targeted funding, for example: the FNM Education Achievement Fund in Saskatchewan or the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements in BC.

The researchers are concerned by the variety, frequency and timing of reporting that is required in all the provinces. In particular in BC there appears to be reporting duplication. School divisions are required to complete the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement; then make public their findings from their data analysis through the Achievement Contracts and their annual strategic plans. The integrated reporting required in Alberta under the combined three-year Education Plan and Annual Education Results Report (with a section specific to FNM results) offers one way of packaging and communicating the accountability framework effectively. We are wary of the two-pronged reporting now required under the Saskatchewan model. Our hope is that at some point the CIP and the FNM Education Plan could be integrated effectively.





As the researchers come to understand the “big picture” of public policy in relation to accountability; we are mindful of the tasks at hand – the requirement to create a consistent set of achievement measures that could be adopted province wide. With that goal in mind, we shift our gaze once again from the policy frameworks to the annual reporting undertaken by divisions in these same four provinces.

This level of analysis is based on the random selection of four school divisions’ annual reports. These reports are public documents and we were able to access them easily. The intention of this level of review was to see how the school divisions’ communicated and actualized the provincial policies.

DIVISION ANNUAL REPORTS ON ACHIEVEMENT: BY PROVINCE

ONTARIO

To see how the provincial framework is actualized in 2012/13, the researchers identified three randomly selected school divisions for closer examination. These Board Improvement Plans (BIP) are made public on a yearly basis as per the provincial framework requirements. The researchers name the three divisions and identify some unique aspects of their reporting that may inform how we interpret the implementation of policy.

RAINBOW DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

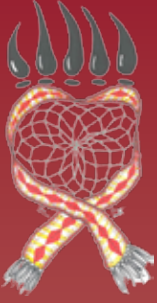
Highlights of their annual report include:

- BIP identifies 1,200 FNMI students;
- BIP identifies 11 First Nations Tuition Agreements;
- BIP states, “individual School Improvement Plans (SIP) will address FNMI student need and they will collect data based on the demographics of the school”;
- Data collected in the SIP may include indicators such as: graduation rates, and the number of 4/4+ graduates anticipated; credit accumulation; pass rates in applied and college classes, COOP and dual-credit participation.
- This data is viewed as optional by the school division;
- The school division does not disaggregate data by ethnicity, though schools can do so based on their demographics; and
- A review of data specific to FNMI learners will be undertaken in select schools in 2012-2013.

Strategies identified by the division to support continued implementation:

- Continue to hire FNMI staff in all positions;
- Re-engagement programs, including alternative education programs for FNMI students;
- Work with Service Canada to reduce the financial barriers of returning students;
- Transition teams, including Aboriginal support workers to work with youth to create FNMI transition plans;
- Pathways to enhance partnerships with post-secondary programs;
- Expand the dual credit program for FNMI students in native social work and introduction to business programs at Laurentian University;
- Develop FNMI cultural standards;
- Maintain FNMI cultural centers in all high schools;
- Provide an Aboriginal support worker in each high school to act as a liaison between the school, family and community;
- Offer cultural learning opportunities for principals and curriculum leads across the division;
- Include representative of all schools in the Aboriginal Youth Leadership Group;
- Seek feedback from both the Aboriginal Youth Leadership Group, and the





- First Nations Advisory Committee on safety in schools;
- Support all schools to participate in Aboriginal Education Day;
- Promote Restorative Justice Circles in response to issues and concerns; and
- New staff induction includes training on Equity and Inclusion issues.

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD 2011 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

- The summary of the BIP does not identify FNMI student numbers; and
- Implementation of the FNMI Education Policy Framework is ongoing and includes:
 - Deepening relationships and partnerships with FNMI community (Peel Aboriginal Steering Committee and the Peel Aboriginal Network);
 - Exploring effective means to build greater awareness about Métis people – with both the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Credit River Métis Council;
 - Continue to develop a curriculum resource with the Mississauga of the New Credit First Nation;
 - Continue to offer professional development for staff to foster greater awareness of FNMI traditions, cultures, and perspectives and provide credible, authentic teaching and learning resources;
 - Create a FNMI Advisory Circle; and
 - Take concrete steps towards the development of a voluntary, confidential, self-identification policy.

TRILLIUM LAKELANDS DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

- Directors Annual Report (2011) declares 129 self-identified Aboriginal students; and
- Strategies included:
 - Restorative Justice Circles provide significant supports in two high schools;
 - Increase in numbers of students taking native studies; and
 - School district director of education reports on good participation from FNMI parents in Aboriginal Education Day.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The researchers opted to review four randomly selected school districts' Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements and Achievement Contracts.

CENTRAL OKANAGAN SCHOOL DISTRICT: ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT (DEC. 2011)

This school district begins with a preamble that sets the tone for the relationships that emerge through the enhancement agreement. They state, "The intent of this Agreement is to hold all School District employees, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, students, parents, families and communities accountable to and responsible for supporting Aboriginal student achievement" (p. 2). The design of enhancement agreement in this district is based on the Medicine Wheel (Mind, Body, Spirit and Emotion) aspects; each aspect identifies a goal. Each goal is followed by the identification of performance indicators and targets.

Emotional Goal: To increase the sense of belonging, self-respect and pride of heritage for Aboriginal students.

- Performance Indicators:
 - Improved attendance rates and decreased tardiness;
 - Decreased suspension rates;
 - Increased Satisfaction Survey participation;
 - Improved Satisfaction Survey results; and
 - Increased Aboriginal student recognition in areas such as academics, athletics, citizenship, leadership, and fine arts.
- Results:
 - Baseline data were established in 2006 but not reported on in this document.

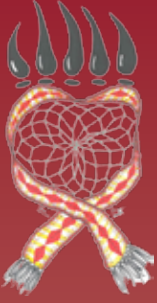
Spiritual Goal: To increase awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal history, traditions, culture and language for Aboriginal students.

- Performance Indicators:
 - Increased number of Aboriginal students enrolled in an Okanagan Language program in elementary, middle and secondary schools;
 - Increased number of Aboriginal students participating in school-based and district activities (K-12);
 - Increased number of Aboriginal students successfully completing BC First Nations Studies 12; and
 - Increased number of Aboriginal students receiving school credit for participation in Aboriginal Cultural activities.
- Results:
 - Baseline data were generated in 2006 but not reported on in this document.

Physical Goal: To increase the awareness of healthy choices that will enhance the physical well-being of Aboriginal students.

- Performance Indicators:
 - Increased student participation in active living;
 - Decreased number of students involved in smoking, alcohol, and drug misuse; and
 - Decreased number of students hungry in school.
- Results:
 - Baseline data were generated in 2006 but not reported on in this document.





Intellectual Goal: To improve Aboriginal student academic achievement from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

- Performance Indicators:
 - Increased transition rates from K-12;
 - Increased number of K-9 students fully meeting/exceeding expectations in reading, writing and numeracy;
 - Increased student performance in Grades 10-12 provincial exams; and
 - Increased graduation rates with Dogwood completion.
- Results:
 - Baseline data were generated in 2006;
 - K-3 FNM student reading and writing results (2005: 85%; 2011 Target: 95%);
 - K-3 FNM Student numeracy results (2005:91%; 2011 Targets: 95%);
 - 4-6 FNM Student reading and writing results (2005:88%; 2011 Target: 95%);
 - 4-6 FNM Numeracy results (2005: 89%; 2011 Target: 95%);
 - 7-9 FNM Reading and writing results (2005: 86%; 2011 Target: 90%);
 - 7-9 FNM Student Numeracy results (2005: 76%; 2011 Target: 90%);
 - Provincial exam – baseline data generated in 2006; and
 - Graduation rates – baseline data generated in 2006.

This school district also submits a *BC Achievement Contract* to the Ministry. Some highlights specific to FNM learners include:

- Performance indicator: Increased graduation rates
 - Results: Target 75% FNM learners will graduate; 2010 Actual 61% of FNM.
- Strategies to address shortfall:
 - Disaggregate FNM student achievement data;
 - Build stronger connections (partnerships) and integration between the work of Aboriginal education program, career and life coaches, readiness, health promoting school committee members, and middle and high school principals; and
 - Continue to enhance participation of educators in the Planning Cycle (study – data analysis; plan – Using data to guide instructional choices; design – choosing strategies that work; act – communications with diverse stakeholder groups; engagement in the analysis process).

NORTH VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT – ABORIGINAL ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT (2011-2016)

This five-year agreement recognizes the shared responsibilities of schools, teachers, parents, communities and governing bodies to meet the achievement needs of all FNM learners. The enhancement agreement communicates the commitment of the partners towards shared decision-making, goal setting and the identification of strategic initiatives to support learning. The design of this enhancement agreement is based on the idea of the four “House Posts” including: implementing, enhancing, strengthening and engaging. The goals and performance indicators are presented below.

Goal: To improve the sense of belonging and presence of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

- Performance indicators:
 - Increased attendance; and
 - Increased level of satisfaction related to sense of pride, caring and belonging as obtained through the use of the Aboriginal Education Survey (AES).

Goal: To increase the awareness and provision of healthy choices that will enhance the well-being of FNM students.

- Performance indicators:
 - Increased level of participation in school and community activities as obtained through the use of the AES;
 - Increased participation and success in physical education classes;
 - Decreased number of students engaged in risk-taking behaviours (AES); and
 - Increased number of students who not become hungry throughout the day (AES).

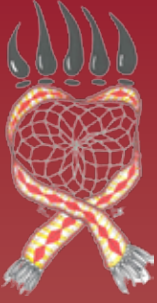
Goal: To increase the academic success of FNM students.

- Performance indicators:
 - Increased number of students fully meeting/exceeding expectations in Grade 4 language arts assessments and other district assessments;
 - Increased number of students fully meeting/exceeding expectations in the Grade 8 report cards and other district assessments; and
 - Increased number of students achieving C+ or better on Grade 10 provincial exams.

Goal: To increase the number of students of Aboriginal ancestry who graduate from secondary school motivated to further their education, realize their career goals and pursue their dreams.

- Performance indicators:
 - Increase number of students who believe they are being successful at school (AES);
 - Increased number of students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma; and
 - Increased number of students who want to continue their education after secondary school (AES).





This district also submitted a *North Vancouver Achievement Contract (2012)* some highlights include:

- Objective 1.4: To improve literacy rate of secondary FNM learners receiving C+ or better.
 - Performance Target: Baseline 2009 – 50%; 2011 Target – 75%; Actual 44%; and
 - Strategy: Continue individualized learning plans; Use of FNM Support Workers; Increase number of in-services available for teachers.

- Objective 2.3: To improve achievement in numeracy of FNMI students receiving C+ or better.
 - Performance Target: Baseline 2011 – 31%; 2012 Target – 50%; Actual – 44%; and
 - Strategy: Continue individualized learning plans.

- Objective 3.2: To increase first time Grade 12 graduation and six-year completion rates for FNM learners (six years to complete high school from Grade 8).
 - Graduation Performance Target: Baseline 2009 – 66%; 2011 Target – 80%; Actual – 63%; and
 - Six-year Completion P. T: Baseline 2009 – 52%; 2011 Target – 70%; Actual 49%.

This school district remains aware of the low levels of graduation rates and achievement rates. They remain committed to disaggregating data to illuminate what is work and what needs to change; they will continue to develop the roles and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee; and will towards enhanced partnership relationships under the First Nations Education Enhancement Agreements.

ARROW LAKES SCHOOL DISTRICT – ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT (2009-2010)

This school district initiated the AEEA in 2007 and has since revised the document in 2008 and again in 2009. The district states, “The representatives of Aboriginal parents, community members, Nakusp and District Museum, Circle of Aboriginal Women and Friends, and the Division share the collective responsibility for the Arrow Lakes Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement through the Arrow Lakes Aboriginal Educational Enhancement Council (ALAEEC)” (p. 2). The district acknowledges that there are no defined First Nations reserves within the boundaries of the school district; therefore, the ALAEEC represents the voice of the Aboriginal community. They meet once a year to review the achievement data and to work collaboratively with the district to set priorities and identify program needs. Like the other AEEAs, specific performance goals and objectives are identified, these include:

Goal: Enhance the Aboriginal student's sense of belonging and improve self-esteem.

- Performance measures:
 - Increased participation of Aboriginal children in cultural activities in school and community;
 - Increase in Aboriginal students taking a leadership role in their school and community;
 - Increased participation of Aboriginal students involved in extra-curricular activities; and
 - Increase in the percentage of Aboriginal student's positive responses to questions related to self-esteem on the Ministry Satisfaction Survey (Grades 4 and 7) and on any district developed survey.
- Strategy:
 - Baseline data will be established during the first year of this agreement.

Goal: To improve Aboriginal student achievement.

- Performance Measures:
 - Increase number of Aboriginal students meeting or exceeding expectations to BC performance standards in reading and writing assessments (Grade 2-9);
 - Increase the number of Aboriginal students attaining a C+ or better final Grade of report cards in Grades 4 and 7 in language arts, math, science and social studies;
 - Increase the number of Aboriginal students meeting or exceeding expectations in Grade 4 reading, writing, numeracy (Foundational Skills Assessment); and
 - Improve parent and student satisfaction with student progress in reading, writing, and math as measured by provincial surveys.

It is unclear how much progress this school district has made since it initiated the AEEA process in 2007. The district does have an Achievement Contract (2011-12). This is a small division with 561 students in 2010; 58 of whom are self-declared Aboriginal students. This district provides a unique perspective of responsibility for closing the achievement gap for FNM learners in that this is a small division without a First Nation within its jurisdiction. Given that this is a small division, the District Executive Council undertakes the data analysis and sets priorities for its schools. The committee is represented by four school principals and the district's literacy coordinator. The report identifies two areas of reporting.

Reading: Grade 4 (2011)

- Results – There were 3 Aboriginal children in this group, all were meeting expectations





Reading: Grade 7 (2011)

- Results – There were eight Aboriginal children in this group; three were not yet meeting; four were meeting; and one was exceeding expectations

Strategies:

- The Aboriginal Education Learning Team create learning opportunities for all learners about FNM issues and cultures;
- Maintain reduced class sizes where there are more identifiable vulnerable children;
- Provide learning assistance and differentiated resources;
- Provision of one-on-one reading intervention for learners not reading at grade-level;
- Continue Aboriginal inquiry research projects; and
- Implement a coaching/feedback professional learning network to improve achievement through research-based effective instructional practices

While this division is small they are proactively addressing the need for resources and teacher development in the areas of assessment and culturally responsive teaching. The district has provided the resources necessary to address both of these priorities; teams of support have been created and they have an active partnership in this community. The benefit they identify to their size is that they are able to provide individualized program support for learners.

LANGLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT – ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT (2010-2015)

This school district began its journey together in 2007. In recognition of the traditional territory of the Coast Salish people – Matsqui, Kwantlen and Katzie First Nations – the design of the AEEA is informed by local knowledge. The circle is divided into four quadrants (red, yellow, black and the white). Each quadrant representing one of the following aspects: Spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual. The district and partners organize their respective goals and outcomes around this design.

In 2007 the school district met with those people who support, assist and care for Aboriginal students in the district. These stakeholders were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What is success for our children?
- What does success look like?
- What do you want for your children?

Some of these stakeholders became a part of the governing body *ya:yestel'* (the school district; The Kwantlen Nation; Katzie Nation; Matsqui Nation; the Lower Fraser Valley Aboriginal Society and the Waceyá Métis Community). This governance model is celebrated in the document in that individuals included their own vision statements, narratives and comments in the document itself, participants are named, and the background history to the traditional territory and its people are outlined. A closer examination of some of the aspects of the agreement is presented below.

Emotional Goal: To nurture, guide, strengthen and enhance a sense of belonging and strong cultural pride for Aboriginal children – our future leaders.

- Indicators of success:
 - Improved school attendance; and
 - Results of survey completed by children, parents/guardians and staff.

Spiritual Goal: To strengthen the spiritual connection for our Aboriginal children.

- Indicators of success:
 - Improved school attendance;
 - Improved participation in school, school district, region and community; and
 - Improved participation in school-based Aboriginal Awareness Days.

Physical Goal: to improve the physical well-being of Aboriginal children and to empower them to make healthy choices.

- Indicators of success:
 - Participation in physical activities;
 - Portfolio information contained within the grad transitions 12 requirement; and
 - School attendance.

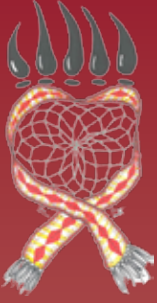
Intellectual Goal: To improve the success of our Aboriginal children by building their self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence.

- Indicators of success:
 - Increased grade to grade transitions;
 - Increased school completion rates;
 - Increased early literacy performance; and
 - Increased number of students transitioning to post-secondary trades/ education or employment.

Strategies which support these goals include:

- Support Elders in mentoring students;
- Celebrating transitions for all learners;
- Facilitate family support;
- Promote First Peoples English (10,11, 12) and other Aboriginal curricula;
- Understand and respect Aboriginal histories;
- Involve Aboriginal support workers in all individual education plan/school-based team meetings;
- Participate in the First Salmon Ceremony;
- Participate in Aboriginal family gatherings;
- Hold Traditional Circles; and
- Review, and enhance the quality and availability of Aboriginal resources.





This school district also submitted the *Achievement Contract (2011-2014)*. The district underwent a review of their AEEA in 2008. Recommendations included: improving the success of Aboriginal learners; and increase the numbers of Aboriginal students completing secondary schooling. The reality was that **1 in 3 Aboriginal students did not complete** secondary school. This division reports that they have 1,632 self-declared students of Aboriginal ancestry.

The achievement contract identified five priority areas including:

- To honour the Aboriginal culture that Kindergarten children bring and to build a strong foundation for future learning;
- To increase the numbers of Aboriginal children reading at grade-level;
- To increase the number of Aboriginal children that read for information;
- To increase the ability of each Aboriginal learner to be successful in secondary school; and
- To increase the understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal history, traditions and cultures.

Some strategies to support meeting the aims of the five priority areas included:

- Teaching peer support and restorative justice;
- Acknowledge Elders as a source of knowledge;
- Provide professional development on Aboriginal issues;
- Enhance recognition ceremonies and make them culturally responsive;
- Develop and share culturally responsive resources and instructional strategies;
- Continue to use a team approach to address identifiable learning needs based on data;
- Provide interventions quickly and seamlessly as needed;
- Continue to monitor data from classroom teachers and district assessments to identify students not yet meeting or minimally meeting expectations;
- Continue to offer the K-5 summer culture and reading program; and
- Provide family gatherings.

This district has yet to post positive results with the Aboriginal learners in the district. Partially this is due to the lack of disaggregated data as represented in the achievement contract.

ALBERTA

In Alberta, divisions are required to submit a combined three-year education plan and annual education results report (AERR). Embedded in these AERRs is the disaggregated data required under the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*. The researchers will provide a closer examination of four Alberta school divisions' annual reports. Specifically, the researchers aim to examine specific aspects of this reporting related to FNMI learners.



Rocky View School Division implemented its own accountability pillar in 2009. Since that time they have been able to create baseline data to compare to the provincial averages. This division claims **higher FNMI** results in provincial assessments in almost every area of assessment. Details of their *Rocky View Schools 2011-12 Annual Education Results Report* are summarized below.

This overview will identify each goal, outcome and indicator of achievement in selected areas specific to FNMI results. (AE – Alberta Education required target)

Goal 1: Learners have their individual needs met.

Outcome 1.3: Resources and programs ensure all learners succeed

- (AE) Overall percentage of students and self-identified FNMI students in Grades 3, 5, and 9 who achieve the acceptable standards on Provincial Achievement Test (PAT).
 - Results: 71% of FNMI learners in this division achieve the acceptable standards compared to 58% based on the provincial average (2011/12).
- (AE) Overall percentage of students and self-identified FNMI students who achieve the acceptable standard on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 91% of FNMI learners in this division achieve the acceptable standards compared to 78% based on the provincial average (2011/12).
- (AE) High school completion rate of students and FNMI students within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 72% of FNMI learners in this division complete high school compared to 40% based on the provincial average (2010/11) .

Goal 2: Learners are self-directed, innovative, ecologically intelligent and entrepreneurial.

Outcome 2.1 Learners direct and feel ownership for their learning.

- (AE) Annual dropout rate for students and self-identified FNMI students aged 14 to 18.
 - Results: 2.8% dropout rate for FNMI students in this division compared to 9% on the provincial average (2010/11).

Outcome 2.4 Learners flourish in a culture of excellence.

- (AE) Overall percentage of students and self-identified FNMI students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieve the standard of excellence on PAT (Overall cohort results).
 - Results: 5.5% of these FNMI learners achieved the standard of excellence on PAT compared to the provincial average of 6.6% (2011/12).



- (AE) Overall percentage of students and self-identified FNMI students who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 22% of these FNMI learners in this division achieved the standard of excellence on diploma exams compared to the provincial average of 9% (2011/12).
- (AE) Percentage of students and self-identified FNMI students writing four or more diploma exams within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 47% of these FNMI learners in this division wrote four or more diploma exams with three years of entering Grade 10 compared to the provincial average of 20%. (2010/11).

Goal 3: Instructional design challenges and engages the learners.

Outcome 3.1 Instructional practices empower learners.

- (AE) Percentage of Grade 12 students and self-identified FNMI students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
 - Results: 43% of FNMI learners in the division were eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship compared to the provincial average of 34% (2010/11)
- (AE) High school to post-secondary transition rate of students and self-identified FNMI students within six years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 37% of FNMI learners in the division transitions to post-secondary compared to the provincial average of 30% (2011/12).

Goal 4: Learning environment enables the acquisition of 21st Century Competencies

Note: there are no specific FNMI outcomes in this area.

HIGH PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION (HPSD)

This review is based on the school division's *Combined Three-Year Education Plan* (2012-2013 through 2014-2015) and *Annual Education Results Report* (2011-2012). In their view, this division notes significant gaps in FNMI student learning in all areas. This division does not identify the numbers of students who self-declare as FNMI learners. Every performance measure is scored at a "very low" and is identified as a cause for "concern" (more on this below).

On the plus side, the division has undertaken a narrative inquiry research project with FNMI student groups, respective parents and teachers and principals. In the annual report the division states:

HPSD is committed to working collaboratively with its diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit parents to help provide an engaging learning environment for their students. Continuing from the FNMI Community Engagement work conducted last year in most of our First Nations and Métis communities HPSD is implementing its first ever HPSD FNMI Narrative Inquiry. The purpose of the inquiry is to better understand the lived school experiences of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in HPSD schools with the aim of improving service to these students and making a positive difference to their overall achievement at school.

These FNMI narratives may serve as one method to identifying and removing the barriers to fuller participation in education. The aim is to ensure positive learning environments where FNMI students may thrive.

HPSD has been collecting assessment data since 2007. Only one goal details achievement outcomes relevant to FNMI learners.

Goal 3: Success for FNMI students

Outcomes: FNMI students are engaged in learning

- Performance measure: High school completion rates percentage of students who completed high school within 3 years of entering Grade 10
 - Results: 30.3% of the FNMI learners in this division completed high school within 3 years of entering Grade 10 (2012 Target: 32%)
- Performance measure: Annual dropout rate of students aged 14-18.
 - Results: 13.6% of the FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 12%).
- Performance measure: High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within 6 years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 20.2% of FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 34%).
- Performance measure: Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
 - Results: 37.3% FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 27%).
- Performance measure: Percentage of students writing four or more Diploma examinations within 3 years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 5.8% FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 20%).
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard on PAT.
 - Results: 52.4% of FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target 60%).
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3,6 and 9 who achieved the standard of excellence on PAT.
 - Results: 1.9% of FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 7.9%).
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 69% of FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 79%).
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 7.1% of FNMI learners in this division (2012 Target: 9.3%).

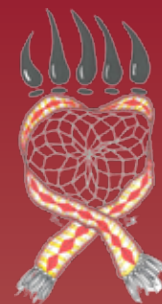




To address the cause for concern the school division commits to addressing the following strategies and timelines (Table 2).

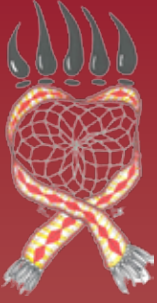
<i>Strategies</i>	<i>2011-12 Action Plan</i>	<i>2012-13 Action Plan</i>	<i>2013-14 Action Plan</i>	<i>2014-15 Action Plan</i>
<i>Cree Core Values</i>	Shared teaching practices that adhere to or honor the values and language of the Cree people.	Ensure that there are teaching practices in place that adhere to or honor the values and language of the Cree people.	Ensure that there are teaching practices in place that adhere to or honor the values and language of the Cree people.	Ensure that there are teaching practices in place that adhere to or honor the values and language of the Cree people.
<i>Strategies</i>	<i>2011-12 Action Plan</i>	<i>2012-13 Action Plan</i>	<i>2013-14 Action Plan</i>	<i>2014-15 Action Plan</i>
<i>Relationships with Other Districts</i>	Board met with other Boards and MLAs to implement identified benefits for all students. Mentor coaches worked together to develop programming and workshops. Resources were developed collaboratively. Continued to actively participate in TeachAnyWare and Moodle Mini Summit organizations.	Board will continue to meet with other Boards, MLAs, Métis Settlement Council, and Band Chiefs to implement identified benefits for all students. Mentor coaches will continue to work together to develop programming and workshop. Resources are developed collaboratively. Continue to actively participate in TeachAnyWare and Moodle Mini Summit organizations.	Mentor coaches will continue to work together to develop programming and workshop. Resources are developed collaboratively. Continue to actively participate in TeachAnyWare and Moodle Mini Summit organizations.	Mentor coaches will continue to work together to develop programming and workshop. Resources are developed collaboratively. Continue to actively participate in TeachAnyWare and Moodle Mini Summit organizations.

<i>School Culture</i>	Used the Alberta Education “Collaborative Frameworks” model, a FNMI steering committee, guided by the school culture coach, assessed and worked with schools and communities to identify barriers to and strategies that will improve aboriginal student outcomes. The school culture coach continued to work with teachers to ensure worldview is implemented in curricula.	Using the Alberta Education “Collaborative Frameworks” model, a FNMI steering committee, guided by the school culture coach, will implement strategies as identified to improve aboriginal student outcomes. Teachers will continue to ensure worldview is implemented in curricula.	Using the Alberta Education “Collaborative Frameworks” model, a FNMI steering committee, guided by the school culture coach, will evaluate strategies implemented. Using the continuous improvement model, revise and implement strategies.	Using the Alberta Education “Collaborative Frameworks” model, a FNMI steering committee, guided by the school culture coach, will evaluate strategies implemented. Using the continuous improvement model, revise and implement strategies.
<i>Strategies</i>	<i>2011-12 Action Plan</i>	<i>2012-13 Action Plan</i>	<i>2013-14 Action Plan</i>	<i>2014-15 Action Plan</i>
<i>Worldview</i>	Supported teachers and shared best practices in the infusion of Aboriginal worldview into the curriculum.	Support teachers and share best practices in the infusion of Aboriginal worldview into the curriculum.	Support teachers and share best practices in the infusion of Aboriginal worldview into the curriculum.	Support teachers and share best practices in the infusion of Aboriginal worldview into the curriculum.



**GRANDE YELLOWHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION (GYPSD) 2012-2015 COMBINED
3-YEAR EDUCATION PLAN AND ANNUAL EDUCATION RESULTS REPORT (AERR)**

This division identifies some of its accomplishments in FNMI as including the FNMI facilitator and FNMI workers who develop and deliver introductions to cultural and traditional games and activities. They also facilitate a sense of belonging for FNMI youth, and develop relationships with FNMI parents and caretakers. They offer a FNMI leadership camp for students in Grade 9 and an FNMI Career Fair for students in Grades 10-12. They have offered FNMI parent meetings. The FNMI facilitator is working on partnership development, specifically to identify a shared vision and set of outcomes for partnerships with this community. This division is posting positive achievement results for FNMI learners.



Goal 3: Success for FNMI students

Outcomes: FNMI students are engaged in learning.

- Performance measure: High school completion rates percentage of students who completed high school within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 70.6% of the FNMI learners in this division completed high school within three years of entering Grade 10 compared to the provincial average of 40.2%.
- Performance measure: Annual dropout rate of students aged 14-18.
 - Results: 3% of the FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average of 9%.
- Performance measure: Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
 - Results: 46.7% FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 34.4%.
- Performance measure: Percentage of students writing four or more diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 24.9% FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 19.6%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard on PAT.
 - Results: 69.8% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 58.3%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the standard of excellence on PAT.
 - Results: 7.8% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 6.6%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 80.7% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 77.6%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 7% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 8.8%.
- Performance Measure: Preparation for lifelong learning, world of work and citizenship.
 - Results: 20.2% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 30.2%.

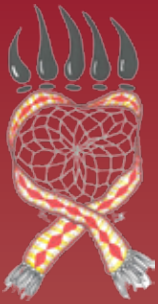
This division has reported positive results for their FNMI learners generally. The division remains committed to some specific strategies to support curriculum integration. The division's Learning Services Unit is addressing how best to infuse FNMI perspectives and worldviews into the curriculum. FNMI literature kits have been created and teachers were hired over the summer months to develop curriculum resources to support FNMI content integration. Cree language acquisition will be recognized during Awards Days. Board of education members have made contact with local Elders. Research is being undertaken to address strategic initiatives to improve learning outcomes.



HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION (HSD)

Combined Education Plan 2012-2015 and the Annual Education Results Report 2011-2012

- Performance measure: High school completion rates percentage of students who completed high school within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 78% of the FNMI learners in this division completed high school within three years of entering Grade 10 compared to the provincial average 40.2%.
- Performance measure: Annual dropout rate of students aged 14-18.
 - Results: 6.0% of the FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 9%
- Performance measure: High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10
 - Results: n/a
- Performance measure: Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
 - Results: 50% FNMI learners in this division compared to provincial average 34.4%.
- Performance measure: Percentage of students writing four or more Diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: 46.8% FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 19.6%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard on PAT.
 - Results: 70.5% of FNMI learners in this division compared to provincial average 58.3%.
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students in Grades 3,6,9 who achieved the standard of excellence on PAT.
 - Results: 9.1% of FNMI learners in this division compared to the provincial average 6.6%.



- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 87.5% of FNMI learners in this division compared to provincial average 77.6%
- Performance measure: Overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations.
 - Results: 12.5% of FNMI learners in this division compared to provincial average 8.8%.

The division recognizes that they have a very small number of FNMI learners attending a number of different schools in the division. They attribute their positive achievement scores for FNMI learners to the targeted and individualized supports they can offer to individual FNMI learners.

SASKATCHEWAN

The researchers reviewed the latest Continuous Improvement Plans (CIP) for the following Saskatchewan school divisions:

- *Lloydminster Roman Catholic Separate School Division Continuous Improvement Framework Strategic Plan (2009-2012);*
- *Sun West School Division Continuous Improvement Framework Plan (2011-2012);*
- *Prairie South School Division Continuous Improvement Report (May 2011);*
- *Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division PreK-12 CIP (March, 2012);*
- *South East Cornerstone Public School Division Three-Year Education Plan (2010 – 2013);*
- *Horizon School Division Continuous Improvement Plan (2011-14) brochure;*
- *Saskatoon Public Schools 2011-2012 CIP;*
- *Prairie Spirit School Division Continuous Improvement Accountability Framework Report (2012);*
- *North West School Division Continuous Improvement Framework (2010-2013);*
- *Light of Christ Roman Catholic Separate School Division Accountability Conference Report (2011-2012);*
- *North East School Division Continuous Improvement Report (2010-2011);*
- *Saskatchewan Rivers School Division Continuous Improvement Report (2010-2011);*
- *Regina Public Schools Continuous Improvement Plan 2012-13;*
- *Northern Lights School Division 2011-2012 Continuous Improvement Plan;*
- *Chinook School Division Chinook School Results (2010-2011) PowerPoint;*
- *Creighton School Division Continuous Improvement and Accountability Framework 2012-2015;*
- *Ile-a-la Crosse School Division Continuous Improvement Plan 2011-2012; and*
- *Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division Strategic Plan 2011-2014.*

The “first glance” of the CIPs provided the researchers the opportunity to become generally familiar with the framework in action. We could see a great deal of difference in the ways that divisions were communicating their reports. We aimed to identify the organization and design of the reports; the strategies and images used to communicate the data; and we were looking for the specific information pertaining to First Nation and Métis learners. The information below summarizes key aspects of a closer review of three school divisions; this section will be followed by the identification of high performing divisions who are already reporting that they are closing the achievement gap:



LLOYDMINSTER CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION (CIP 2009-2012)

In 2009, the board of education and senior administration developed their strategic plan designed to guide schools in LCSD division actions over a three-year period. The board of education identified areas of priority based upon learning data, emerging needs and public consultation meetings. In the summer of 2009, each school developed an action plan aligned with provincial and school division goals. The alignment of provincial and division goals ensures all levels are moving toward the same specific improvement goals.

The unique circumstance of being a border city required LCSD to find a proper balance between mandated assessments from both provinces and those local common measures that are necessary to function as a successful school division. This overview will identify each goal; outcome and indicator of achievement in selected areas specific to FNMI results.

Priority Area Equitable Opportunities #4

Goal 1: For the duration of this CIP Strategic Plan 2009-2012, Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented in every grade.

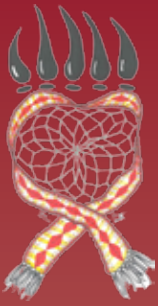
School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1 – All social studies, native studies, Cree and history classes will incorporate the contents of the Treaty Education Kit into their classes;
- Strategy 2 – The humanities team will investigate using Aboriginal resources in the surrounding area to support the Treaty Education Kit; and
- Strategy 3 – All teacher year plans will show evidence of Treaty education content.

Goal 2: For the duration of this CIP Strategic Plan 2009-2012, Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented in every grade.

School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1 – The administration will distribute to each teacher a copy of the Treaty Education Kit;
- Strategy 2 – The library technician will highlight those resources that fit within the Treaty Education Material(s) once per term or as new material become available;



- Strategy 3 – The administration will work with the Aboriginal coordinator in finding ways to support the teachers with any questions that may arise;
- Strategy 4 – The administration expects to see Treaty Education Kits incorporated in all the teacher's yearly time lines in some manner, for the 2009-2010 year with full implementation in the 2010-2011 year with reminders sat the long range meeting in 2011; and
- Strategy 5 – The administration will meet with each grade alike team in the second term, to see how the Treaty Education Kit is fitting into their existing plans and how they are using it in general.

Goal 3: For the duration of this CIF Strategic Plan 2009-2012, Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented in every grade.

School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1 – Every social studies teacher in Kindergarten to Grade 7 will implement the Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit for 20 hours of instructional time; and
- Strategy 2 – Grade 4 social studies teachers and Grade 7 social studies teachers and students will complete Ministry of Education Surveys pertaining to Treaty education.

Goal 4: For the duration of this CIF Strategic Plan 2009-2012, Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented in every grade.

School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1. Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented and/or integrated at each grade-level;
- Strategy 2. Treaty Education Surveys will be completed as requested by the Ministry of Education; and
- Strategy 3. The family liaison and library technician will support teachers in implementation (identification and sharing of supports, etc.).

Goal 5: For the duration of this CIF Strategic Plan 2009-2012, Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) will be implemented in every grade.

School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1 – Teachers, administrators and students will complete surveys at the request of the Ministry of Education;
- Strategy 2 – All staff will use the Saskatchewan Treaty Education Kit(s) provided to implement Treaty Education at their Grade level beginning September 2009;
- Strategy 3 – Library Technician will highlight treaty materials based on needs of the various grades; and
- Strategy 4 – Treaty education will be evident in all planning documents.

Priority Area #2 Smooth Transitions

Goal 1: By May 31, 2010, twenty-five First Nations and Métis students will be enrolled in a Personal Mentoring or the Leadership Mentoring program, in either the junior or senior level of these programs.

School-based administration action plan:

- Strategy 1 – HRHS Admin will support and encourage the collaboration between HRHS Mentorship, Career Counseling, Community Liaison worker, and School Councilors.
- Strategy 2 – All Aboriginal students enrolled in HRHS will be identified with the Mentorship Coordinator.
- Strategy 3 – HRHS Administration will assist and support Aboriginal Mentorship endeavors as proposed by the Mentorship Coordinator.



NORTHERN LIGHTS SCHOOL DIVISION (CIP 2012)

Provincial Priority Area: Equitable Opportunities

Background: The Northern Lights School Division must continually identify innovative strategies to enhance Grade 12 graduation rates for FNM students.

Division measured goal outcomes (by June 2014):

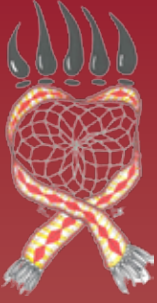
- Increase the number of students who successfully complete the drivers' education program;
- Increase the number of credits students attain annually in the high school program (Grades 10 to 12);
- Increase student participation rates in Treaty Essential Learnings assessment;
- Increase student achievement levels on the Treaty Essential Learnings assessment; and
- Increase student attendance of all students in the school division.

Goal 1: 90% of students in Grade 7 will participate in Treaty Essential Learnings assessment.

- June 2012 – 70 %
- June 2013 – 80 %
- June 2014 – 90 %

Division targets achieved:

- June 2012 – Participation 70%. Achieved 70%.



Goal 2: Grade 7 students will achieve 80% on the Treaty Essential Learnings assessment.

- June 2012 – 70 %
- June 2013 – 75 %
- June 2014 – 80 %

Division targets achieved:

- June 2012 – Participation 72.52%. Achieved 69.87%.

Treaty education strategies for senior administration:

- Strategy 1: Ensure that the Treaty assessment is coordinated when it is time to complete;
- Strategy 2: Review and ensure that content of the Treaty Essential Learnings are understood for each category;
- Strategy 3: Superintendents will ensure that the Treaty resources are to be implemented; and
- Strategy 4: Ensure that treaty resources are in each class.

Other operational plan strategies:

- Strategy 1: Ongoing in-service training for Treaty catalyst/alternate teachers and school staff;
- Strategy 2: Ongoing consultant support for Treaties in the Classroom implementation; and
- Strategy 3: Review Treaty survey data and develop action plan to address gaps.

First Nations and Métis Education Plan:

- Goal 1 – Student Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy;
- Goal 2 – Student Achievement and Data Management; and
- Goal 3 – Student Transitions: High School and Middle Years.

Student Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy:

Goal 1: To improve literacy results for FNM students at PreK so that they are reading at proficient level at end of Grade 3.

- Strategy 1: Provide consultant support for unit planning, release time for collegial planning, within schools and within the division;
- Strategy 2: Participate with other school divisions on the development of a provincial assessment tools;
- Strategy 3: Support schools in the development of instructional practices (i.e. graph phonic cueing systems and semantic cueing system);
- Strategy 4: Implement Pearson Inform and the Northern Lights Phonics Probe, Northern Lights Early Literacy Assessment and Guided Reading Levels for determining response to intervention;

- Strategy 5: Hire literacy coaches for best practices;
- Strategy 6: Professional Development time for teachers to integrate FNM content;
- Strategy 7: Support and enhance Cree literacy in Cree bilingual program;
- Strategy 8: Work towards establishing a Dene instructional program (dual track) in La Loche; and
- Strategy 9: Teacher induction programs for new teachers entering the school division.



Measure: Scores on local common assessments should improve literacy in K-3.

Realistic target: 85% of students should read at instructional, independent and/or proficient level at the end of Grade 3 as per the CIP of NLSD.

Numeracy:

Goal 2: To improve numeracy results for FNM students PreK-3 so that they are achieving at proficient level at the end of Grade 3.

- Strategy 1: Professional development to focus on providing supports and training for teachers as they expand their understanding of the actualization of mathematics and aligning these to outcomes, assessment and the learning plan;
- Strategy 2: Participate with other schools in the division on the development of a provincial assessment tool; and
- Strategy 3: Continue to provide training for new teachers through a teacher induction model.

Measure: Scores on local common assessments should improve numeracy in K-3.

Realistic target: 95% of students in Grades 1-9 will achieve a proficient level by June 2014.

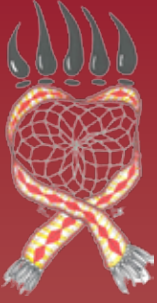
Student Achievement and Data Management:

Goal 1: To improve the use of data to inform instruction and support improvement initiatives.

- Strategy 1: Add a data manager/analyst position to central office to enhance data literacy knowledge and to create capacity by understanding data (achievement data, demographic data, program data, and perceptual data); and
- Strategy 2: Data literacy professional development to inform teachers on how to use data and to inform their practice.

Measure: Scores on local assessments should improve in literacy and numeracy K-3 and student attendance data show an increase in attendance.

Realistic target: Hire position and begin collecting baseline data for setting new targets to inform instruction and support improvement initiatives.



Student Transitions: High School and Middle Years

High School

Goal 1: Increase retention of students who enter Grade 10-12 (the number of students transitioning from Grades 10 to 11 to 12 to graduation).

- Strategy 1: Gather baseline data, utilizing the Northern Lifestyles courses of study to determine if the LDC impacts students learning.
- Strategy 2: Work collaboratively with career transitions teachers in the school to enhance career development and transition strategies available to students as well as career transitions and restorative practice training;
- Strategy 3: Gather data on career exploration and experience programs;
- Strategy 4: Monitor “Bottleneck Project” at each high school; and
- Strategy 5: Work to develop and accommodate specific partnerships with post-secondary, local economic development corporations and other employment agencies/centres that will impact on student transitions.

Measure: Number of students who continue with their high school education. Student survey data.

Realistic target: By June 2014, 40% of all NLSD in high school will attain 8 credits or more in a school year.

Middle Years

Goal 2: To increase the transition rate of students in Grades 6-9 at La Loche and Sandy Bay.

- Strategy 1: Continue with building community initiatives;
- Strategy 2: Use the Tell Them From Me survey to gather data, address issues identified by Tell Them From Me;
- Strategy 3: Identify the underlying situation and working with local stakeholders to determine strategies to attract young parents and students;
- Strategy 4: Build a delivery structure in Sandy Bay for restorative practice training, support and implementation supports staff, community members, parents, local agencies and youth, staff;
- Strategy 5: La Loche students in K-3 explore a dual track language program by using the Dene language as an entry point for community engagement and consultation; and
- Strategy 6: Community consultation report to determine interest in dual track Dene instructional program in La Loche.

Measures:

- Conduct focus groups of non-attending students;
- Conduct focus groups of parents of students who are not attending;
- Collect teacher perception data on student’s non-attendance as part of the data collection; and
- Administer and gather data on Tell Them From Me for Grades 6-9.

Realistic targets:

- By June 2014, 75% of students in Grades 6-9 will attend school every day in La Loche; and
- By June 2014, 70% in Grades 6-9 will attend school every day in Sandy Bay.

A report on progress will be presented to the board of education and at the annual general meeting. A yearly evaluation of our student achievement data, graduation rates and attendance goals will be revisited, re-evaluated and revised as needed.



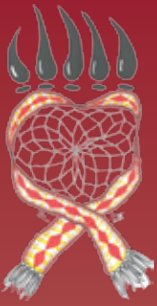
SASKATCHEWAN RIVERS SCHOOL DIVISION (CIP 2010-2011 AND FNM EDUCATION PLAN)

The CIP like all Saskatchewan plans are framed on the integrated four aspects as outlined in the CIAF: Equitable Opportunities; Higher Literacy and Achievement; Smooth Transitions; and System Accountability and Governance. The board of education reports 4,041 students of FNMI ancestry in the division, representing 46% of the total student population. A presentation of some of the results specific to FNMI learners from the 2011-12 report are summarized below. Please note, this division has merged the FNM Education Plan into their CIP. They disaggregate data on FNMI learners and present this data under the CIAF aspect Equitable Opportunities. Selected findings presented in this part of their CIP are identified below:

2.2 Equitable Opportunities

2.2.1 FNM Education Plan

- **Goal:** Increasing graduation rates.
 - Results: The number of FNM graduates has increased partly due to the increased enrolment of FNM learners in the division.
- **Goal:** Percentage of students who graduate within three years of entering Grade 10.
 - Results: The data shows that the number of students graduating within three years of entering Grade 10 has not increased. The division states that a more accurate assessment of graduation rates can be viewed through the persistence to complete data gathered by the Ministry of Education. The division identifies 17.9% of FNM learners who started Grade 10 complete high school in the 4th year.
- **Goal:** Percentage of FNM learners who indicate that they plan to pursue post-secondary education.
 - Results: 67% of FNM learners indicate that they plan to pursue post-secondary education. This number is lower than the division results for non-FNM learners.
- **Goal:** Treaty Essential Learnings.
 - Results: Grade 7 students who participated in the 2011 TEL survey scored significantly higher than in the previous two years in the areas of *Symbolism* and *Contemporary Issues*.



- Results: Non-Aboriginal students scored higher than FNM learners in *Treaty Relationship* and significantly higher in *World View, History* and *Treaties*.

This division acquired funding from the Ministry of Education's First Nations and Métis Education Achievement Fund to offer two projects: *Teaching of the Sacred Fire* and *Provision of FNM Elders' Services*. The division signed a formal partnership agreement with the Prince Albert Grand Outreach Program Inc. to provide the components of the *Teaching of the Sacred Fire* program to learners. The division sponsored an Elders' Gathering (2010) that facilitated the teachings of 85 Elders in schools within the division. This Elders Gathering led to the development of an Elder database. The division has an educational consultant position, Elders, traditional knowledge keepers, Treaty catalyst teachers and FNM educators. The division reports that 22% of teachers self-declare themselves to be of FNM ancestry compared to the provincial average of 10%.

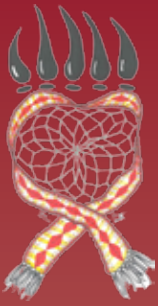
This division is committed to ensuring that, "FNM learners see themselves and their cultural heritage reflected and respected in the school" (CIP, p. 44). The division identifies their indicator of success as the elimination of the academic gap between FNM learners and the general student population. The division may need to "dig deeper" to identify those strategies that serve to address this indicator of success.

Because the researchers were particularly interested in determining the "theory in action" a closer examination of the connection between the provincial CIAF priorities and board of education identified strategies was undertaken (Table 3).

Table 3: Provincial CIAF Priorities and board of education identified strategies



<i>Priorities</i>	<i>Division Strategies specific to FNM learners (*# refers to number of divisions who included this in the CIP; assume all other comments are singular)</i>
<i>Higher Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of all FNM students will complete high school within three years of starting Grade 10. (*2) • The attendance of FNM students will be at the 88% level in K-6 and at the 75% level in Grades 7-12. • The average number of credits earned per grade level will be at or above provincial average including FNM students. • Students will score at or above the provincial mean on the Treaty Essential Learnings survey. • Annual review of personal program plans (PPP) for intensive supports student. • Annual review of PPP will indicate classroom accommodations and modifications that provide appropriate support for students with special learning needs. • Recruit and retain teachers of FNM ancestry. (*6) • The constructivist approach in mathematics will improve student mathematical understanding and allow FNM ways of knowing to be valued. • Curriculum actualization, implementation and renewal. • Development of culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments. • The use of persistence to complete data. • Make sure every school has a complete Treaty Education Kit. • Providing Teaching Treaties in the Classroom professional development offered to all Grade 6-7 teachers. • Early identification of reading and numeracy needs and then immediately define plan of action for the learner. • Supported all ten elementary community schools as they developed and sustained school-based data teams and collaborative inquiry teams with the intention of putting the face on the data. This strategy is intended to support school leadership as they become more data literate and better able to be responsive to students. • Disaggregate FNM student results in the Assessment for Learning test. • Continued development of culturally responsive practices and instructional supports. • Continued enhancement of instructional supports and staffing in the core community schools. • Hire two Treaty catalyst teachers. • Engage members of the Cultural Responsive Schools Advisory Group to facilitate learning sessions for staff and students.



Priorities

Equitable Opportunities

Division Strategies specific to FNM learners (# refers to number of divisions who included this in the CIP; assume all other comments are singular)*

- First Nations Partnerships (*5).
- Innovative programming offerings: store front schools and drivers education provided.
- FNM content, perspectives and ways of knowing
- Treaty education (*10).
- Treaty education training provided by the French education branch.
- Increase understanding and respect for FNM worldviews.
- Use and professional development on differentiated instruction (*3).
- Develop FNM Leadership Teams (*A Time for Significant Leadership*) (*3).
- Two schools reported having FNM student leadership program.
- 29 schools in the division have a FNM SMART goal in their learning improvement plan.
- Research: Do we have culturally responsive schools?
- Professional development for all teachers to increase understanding of FNM ways of knowing (*2)
- Continue to purchase FNM resources integrated into all themed resource boxes.
- Staffing: Hiring a learning support facilitator to support teachers in integrating FNM ways of knowing; hiring a closing the gap facilitator; emphasizing hiring FNM staff to work with all students; and hire a support person to address attendance matters.
- Provide suicide education to prevent or reduce suicidal behaviour.
- Support action research projects with a focus on educational achievement for FNM students.
- Offer FNM language programs (*3).
- By 2017, the gap between performance of FNM students all other students will have been reduced by 10% on all measures of achievement, including graduation.
- Continuation of the Elders' Advisory Council.
- Creation of the *Teaching of the Sacred Fire* program which brings in Elders, storytellers etc. to provide access to FNM ways of knowing.
- FNM consultant models lessons and co-teaches to build capacity with the teaching staff.
- Continued development and expansion of the holistic oral language assessment.
- Schools will develop measurable goals in their learning improvement plans.
- Use learning coaches to assist schools in incorporating FNM worldviews in all subject areas. Assist teachers to integrate Treaty teachings into lesson and unit plans.



<i>Priorities</i>	<i>Division Strategies specific to FNM learners (*# refers to number of divisions who included this in the CIP; assume all other comments are singular)</i>
<i>Smooth Transitions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement the tracking of students into the post-secondary system through the use of a single student identifier.• Collect and use data consistently (PPP).• Implement an early learning strategy in partnership with outside division agencies (*2)• Gender specific instructional strategies and supports (*2) boys and literacy; teen parents and sexual health; and reclaiming teen moms;• 60% of students will transition to employment, post-secondary or return for upgrading.• Use Tell Them From Me survey to identify students perceptions of learning• Provide more opportunities for re-engagement and credit recovery for FNM high school students.• 10% reduction in the number of FNM students who withdraw from school.• Effective communications with FNM communities when students transition to the school division.• Hiring elders to work in our schools.• Connect the high school and elementary teachers when FNM students transition to high school.• Hire a response to intervention facilitator.• Maintain tuition agreements with First Nations communities.
<i>Strong Accountability and Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the representation of FNM people on School Community Councils.• Continue to support existing partnerships with FNM organizations.• Support and enhance partnerships with post-secondary institutions.

In all, the researchers attempt to gain a wide and deep gaze from the policies, layered with the “drilling down” into the board of education reports we observed that perhaps “it’s just too soon to tell” whether we have systems in place that are actively addressing closing of the achievement gap. There is still some diversity in the way in which data are presented; boards of education appear to be in different stages in their ability to analyze the data and interpret what this means. Not all divisions are disaggregating their FNM data. It is not clear that all divisions have active and meaningful relationships with FNM parents and community members in a way that feeds into increasing participation in the self-declaration process or in the analysis and interpretation of the data to identify strategies and priorities.

Boards of education need another two or three reporting cycles to refine their data submission, and to further develop their goals to close the gap on FNM achievement. In the meantime the researchers went further by examining Saskatchewan school learning improvement plans. The aim of that level of review was to determine whether schools were articulating a deeper understanding of the connection between goals and outcomes.



THE REVIEW OF SCHOOL LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PLANS

The consultants undertook a review of individual school websites in the province to see if they made public their learning improvement plan (LIP). One challenge that impeded this work was that only 10 schools posted their LIPs. The school websites do not offer up to date information. While every board of education makes public their CIP, schools in the division are not routinely posting their LIP online; therefore, access to data is limited.

In spite of the limitations, our intention was to examine the LIPs for the specific goals and strategies that support FNM learners. While schools were required to identify their demographics (as identified by the CIAF), few schools identified the numbers of FNM learners in their schools. As well we observed that many schools are not disaggregating their achievement data by FNM learners.

In our view, schools are limited by the lack of a common reporting template within a school division. We found that few schools have SMART goals. The interpretation of data is not providing a clear story for educators, parents or students. Communicating the data is problematic. Boards of education need to support educators in how to analyze data and apply the results for the determination of goals. According to the survey we completed as a component of the report, we found that some educators were unaware of the data generated in the board of education's CIP.

RESEARCHERS REMARKS

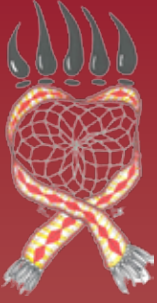
The policy frameworks create a “global” view of how the reporting on assessment should be done, but it allows room for “local” interpretation and priority setting based on the learners, the community, the culture and the leadership. Key indicators that set the tone for higher levels of achievement for FNM learners seem to be:

- Partnership with FNM peoples, organizations and communities;
- A vision for and shared responsibility for accountability;
- A balanced assessment approach;
- An integrated team approach to determining priorities, goals and communications;
- Data analysis as an integral part of the responsibilities of educators and others;
- The recognition and honour of culturally responsive schooling (teaching/assessment);
- The board of education creates a structure to support integrated analysis, planning, assessment and reporting;
- Directing resources to where they are needed;
- Responding quickly to identified need and removing the barriers to supports;
- A clear, shared common language of the need to close the gap;
- More accurate baseline data helps with the identification of “what’s working”; and
- A clear, strong and accessible policy on self-declaration.

The key appears to know with some accuracy the numbers of FNM learners that school divisions have. Yet, when the researchers examined 18 of the Saskatchewan CIPs, we found that only eight boards of education provided the self-declaration data. For those that did report those numbers, they did so both in numeric and in percentage of the total division student populations. The researchers wondered how you address the needs of learners when you don't know who they are or how many you have in the school division.

These are certainly only a snapshot of some of the key indicators. For a closer examination of a division that has moved closer to closing the gap in achievement the researchers took a closer examination of Saskatoon Public Schools.





HIGHER PERFORMING DIVISIONS: ACTIVELY CLOSING THE GAP

SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (CIP 2011-2012)

In the introduction to the CIP the division asserts:

Saskatoon Public Schools is committed to enhancing learning outcomes for First Nations, Inuit and Métis students. We continue to analyze data and strategically set improvement targets with the goal of eliminating learning disparities for our First Nations, Inuit and Métis students. This includes ensuring equitable learning opportunities and outcomes, and smooth transitions for our students. It is our goal to develop a culturally-responsive school division through community engagement and collaboration with Elders, cultural leaders, students, parents, caregivers and community. Through our First Nations, Inuit and Métis Educational Unit, support is provided for the inclusion of Aboriginal content and perspectives across the curriculum. Saskatoon Public Schools is committed to the inclusion of Treaty Education as it is foundational to our cultural responsiveness work.

Our school division received the Premier's Board of Education Award for Excellence and Innovation in Education for the Okicīyapi Partnership in 2007. This partnership with the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. has six major goals which include: i) the creation of a representative workforce, ii) the development and implementation of Aboriginal curricula and cultural programming, iii) language development, iv) the eradication of racism, v) creating and supporting culturally responsive schools, and vi) maintaining a respectful and equitable co-governance structure.

The CIP like all Saskatchewan plans is framed on the integrated four aspects as identified in the CIAF: Equitable Opportunities, Higher Literacy and Achievement, Smooth Transitions, and System Accountability and Governance. A presentation of some of the results specific to FNMI learners from the 2011-12 report are summarized below.

Priority Area: Equitable Opportunities for All

Assessment for reading:

- **Goal:** Percentage of Aboriginal Grade 7 students who performed at “adequate or higher” and “proficient.”
 - Results: SPS reported meaningfully higher averages of FNMI learners in all areas of reading compared to the provincial average.
- **Goal:** Percentage of Aboriginal Grade 10 students who performed “similar” to the provincial average.
 - Results: SPS reported similar to the provincial averages in reading comprehension skills – explicit and implicit comprehension.

Analysis of reading assessments:

- SPS reported similar to higher results for FNMI learners compared to the provincial average;
- SPS reported Grade 4 and 7 Aboriginal students' performance was meaningfully higher than the provincial average; and
- SPS reported Grade 10 Aboriginal students' performance was equal or higher to provincial average.

Assessment for math:

- **Goal:** Percentage of Aboriginal students who performed at “adequate” or “higher” or “proficient.”
 - Aboriginal students performed as well as or higher than the provincial average.

Based on the analysis of data by SPS the following strategies were identified for continued work into the next year:

- Continued work on curriculum integration;
- Development of culturally responsive learning environments;
- Supporting the inclusion and representation of FNMI ways of knowing, being and doing in SPS policies, procedures and curriculum;
- Analyze, summarize and strategically set improvement targets based on the baseline data from the Treaty education survey (2011);
- Nurture the cultural identity of our children and youth;
- Continue with the Okicīyapi and Whitecap Dakota First Nation partnerships;
- Support action research opportunities to improve education achievement for FNMI learners; and
- Institute a strategic alliance amongst all partners to promote, strengthen and facilitate FNMI education.

SPS also prepared the required *First Nations and Métis Education Action Plan (2012-2015) Report* required under the new reporting framework for FNM education. Highlights of the report are summarized below.

The board of education has maximized their leadership potential in the area of FNM education by growing their FNMI Unit from one educational consultant position to an entire unit with two superintendents and 12 staff. They are focused on building a representative workforce, curriculum development, language revitalization and cultural responsiveness. The FNMI Unit provides learning supports for over 22,000 students in 56 schools in the division. The report identifies the FNMI student population as being 3,747 self-declared learners, representing 16.9% of the student population in the division.

The board of education aligns their FNMI Action Plan with the goals of the CIAF. Two important aspects of the reporting include the identification of Data Teams (teachers, community school coordinator, literacy teacher, vice-principal, school resource teachers) with the support of SPS leadership to analyze data to identify strategic improvement targets with an aim of eliminating learning disparities. The board of education also received support from the Ministry of Education’s First Nations and Métis Education Achievement Fund (Sept. 2012) to address equitable outcomes for FNMI learners. The Action Plan identifies alignment with the CIAF by determining the provincial goal; the board of education’s SMART goal and the Actions. Some examples are outlined below.





Goal 1: Equitable outcomes and higher literacy for FNMI learners.

SMART Goal: During the period from September 2012- June 2015, as measured by the Early Years Evaluation (EYE), the percentage of Kindergarten First Nations, Inuit and Métis students who demonstrate appropriate development in i) Cognitive Skills and ii) Language and Communication, will increase by 10% each year.

Actions: Hire a speech and language pathologist who will work in schools with the highest number of vulnerable FNMI kindergarten students and provide family literacy support.

SMART Goals: During the period from September 2012 - June 2014, as measured by the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment.

- The percentage of Grade 1 FNMI students achieving or exceeding end of grade expectations (instructional level I or higher) will improve as follows:
 - 2012-13 – 37% will achieve at this level (12% improvement over 2011 results); and
 - 2013-14 – 49% will achieve at this level (12% improvement over projected 2012-13 results).

Actions: Providing differentiated and responsive supports.

- Some schools will have a designated literacy teacher or instructional consultant;
- Data teams and collaborative inquiry teams will build data analysis skills set of teachers; and
- Develop culturally responsive schools and instructional supports

RESEARCHERS REMARKS

Saskatoon Public Schools has successfully developed a structure for achievement for FNMI learners. They have developed an integrated, achievement oriented and responsive system. They demonstrate a culture of assessment and achievement with all stakeholders working towards greater levels of achievement for all learners. This foundation is research driven, based on authentic partnerships and measurable action.

This narrative was crafted by the researchers following an examination of the board of education's CIP and FNM Education Plan and a conversation with a superintendent.

SPS has created an integrated and multidimensional structure to facilitate the closing of the achievement gap for FNM learners. Their FNM Unit is comprised of 2 Superintendents and 12 staff. They address the development of a representative workforce; undertake partnership development and enhancement; and address issues of curriculum and instruction as tied to assessment. They embrace, advocate for and model Culturally Responsive Schooling.

There is an entrenched culture of assessment in the division. The division is guided by research on culturally responsive teaching; addressing literacy and numeracy in communities with a higher rate of poverty. They created Data Teams to analyze

and disaggregate the data. It is evident that much leadership development has been undertaken to both support the development of data savvy school leaders; and division leaders who are committed to culturally responsive schooling.

The culture of the division has shifted over time; they have been proactive in challenging and altering their beliefs about poverty, FNM learners, language revitalization, and other matters. They have refined their commitments to action based on this cultural shift in the organization. They provided in-service opportunities to develop the cultural competency of school based administrators. They communicate a strong commitment to “buy-in” on the part of all employees.

Culturally responsive teaching has been researched by the FNM Unit, and educators have been challenged to examine their core beliefs – “making it personal to make it professional” (Prowse, personal communications March 2013) became the approach they took to transform organizational culture. Action-research projects extend that learning to engage others including Community School educators in the practice of identifying what’s working to support the learning outcomes of FNM learners in the division. They established FNM Learning Leaders in schools to enhance learning and provide models of other educators.

The work of addressing the achievement gap for FNM learners in SPS has been recognized as innovative and an example of excellence. SPS published their case study in the book, *Putting Faces on the Data* (Fullan, 2012).

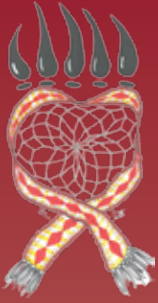
The researchers believe the positive results for FNM learners is directly attributed to the cultural shift, the integrated and multi-dimensional planning to address the gap; the internal funding (as opposed to project based year-to-year funding) and the development of a leadership for accountability. Much can be learned from SPS that will serve other Divisions in how they work to address the achievement gap.

The board of education has embraced the tough work of self-analysis; they have critically examined their beliefs and commitments to action. They have challenged their understanding and level of practice to facilitate culturally responsive learning experiences. They have challenged the core beliefs of themselves as educators.

The board of education has addressed the learning needs of educators to effectively interpret assessment data and create responsive educational decisions; they have provided the support networks (data teams) to build the capacity for assessment and they are budgeting for sustainability for these initiatives. They support teacher and administrator development through in-services and action-based research endeavours. By doing so, they have effectively built the capacity of educators to “put a face” on data and to translate the data into action for real measurable outcomes.

The board of education has addressed the need to build leadership capacity. They have a long-standing and innovative partnership with Whitecap Dakota First Nation and through the Okicīyapi Partnership with the local tribal council and the Métis Local. They have created a Culturally Responsive Advisory Committee which informs the establishment and entrenchment of a culturally responsive environment and attitude towards learning that is system wide. They have provided leadership development for all community school administrators. They have built on the Community Schools Action Plan by disaggregating data in literacy and numeracy and by identifying actions that are research driven. For example, their emphasis on early learning for life.





The board of education is proactively addressing literacy in the early years. They have engaged community school teachers, speech and language pathologists, and literacy resource teachers to work in a team-based approach to address the learning needs of children living in poverty. Their aim is to provide a solid foundation for learner success that will carry forth throughout the remainder of the child's schooling experience.

The researchers believe Saskatoon Public Schools is a model for how best to structure a division to eliminate the achievement gap for FNMI learners. Like Rocky View School Division and Grande Yellowhead School Division in Alberta high performing divisions share:

- A common, shared and declared commitment to achievement and closing the achievement gap for FNM learners;
- Meaningful, authentic relationships and partnerships with FNM peoples and organizations;
- The ability to accurately determine the numbers of self-declared learners in the division;
- A structure to support assessment through the development of data teams;
- A structure to support cultural and language learning;
- The practice of differentiation in the classroom;
- Access to resources (human and material) to support culturally responsive teaching;
- Professional development to increase capacity for data analysis and for culturally responsive teaching practices;
- The capacity to offer individualized supports in reading;
- Early intervention in literacy;
- Seamless access to additional learning supports;
- Internal funding allocated to specific programs aimed to support FNM learners;
- A system to address transitions between elementary and secondary, secondary and post-secondary, and world of work;
- A priority for the hiring of FNM employees to create a representative workforce; and
- Culturally responsive learning environments are valued.

The researchers remain confident that closing the gap in achievement for FNM learners is possible. We are hopeful that our work in this report will inform structural changes for Divisions as they intensify their commitments to our shared responsibilities. It is not our aim to be prescriptive about approaches and strategies: divisions must consider the needs of those in their schools. Perhaps, through a careful examination of some of the strategies used elsewhere and presented in the document educational leaders may be able to identify strategies they have not yet considered.

SECTION III: RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are not presented in order of priority and must be viewed as part of a larger integrated system of responses.

THERE IS A PROVINCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK: IMPLEMENT IT

A focus on FNM education is not new in the province of Saskatchewan. The province has had nearly a thirty year mandate for the inclusion of FNM content in the curriculum. Some policies, frameworks and other documents include:

- *The Continuous Improvement and Accountability Framework* (2011);
- *The Learning Community in Aboriginal Education - Priorities Report: 2005-2007*;
- *Building Communities of Hope* (2004);
- *Building Partnerships* (2003);
- *Action Plan: 2000-2005 Aboriginal Education*;
- *Aboriginal Education Indicators* (1999);
- *Aboriginal Resource List for K-12* (1999);
- *Diversity in the Classroom Series* (1995) including the document entitled *Aboriginal Cultures and Perspectives: Making a Difference in the Classroom*;
- *Diverse Voices: Selecting Equitable Resources for Indian and Métis Education* (1995);
- *Indian Languages: Curriculum Guide for Kindergarten to Grade 12* (1994);
- *Aboriginal Education Initiatives in Saskatchewan Education: 1995-1998*;
- *Our Children, Our Communities and Our Future* (1997);
- *Indian and Métis Education Policy from K-12* (1989); and
- *Education Equity: A Report on Indian/Native Education in Saskatchewan* (1985) by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

Board of education leadership plays a key role in communicating to the staff the provincial mandates. Boards of education need to communicate the long-standing history of attending to FNM education in Saskatchewan. They need to ensure that educators and non-teachers in their divisions are able to regularly, consistently, proactively and accurately communicate the reason why they are teaching FNM content, modelling FNM pedagogies, and engaging FNM peoples, Elders, traditional knowledge keepers and community members in the classroom. We have a shared responsibility in this province to close the achievement gap for FNM learners everywhere in our province.





BUILDING A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT

We believe that boards of education require a paradigm shift to a more holistic framework to address the perceived lack of buy-in evidenced in our review. Saskatoon Public Schools (2008) provides one approach to this paradigm shift. That board of education identifies three dimensions of culturally responsive education systems that frame their work. These three dimensions include the personal, institutional and the instructional dimensions.

The personal dimension requires teachers to be active reflective practitioners. “They have to engage in self-reflection to examine their beliefs about self and others...and to confront biases that emerge.” When bias remains unchallenged it will affect the ability of the educator to connect with students, parents, families and communities. The biases can limit their ability to provide equitable educational opportunities for all of their students.

The institutional dimension reflects the institutions policies and values; institutional leaders then must present a consistent message about the importance of the initiatives. Another component is the pursuit of authentic relationships and partnership development with FNM peoples and communities. These types of direct actions shift the power to one of passive uni-directional involvement in schools to a more active engagement in the decision making structures.

The instructional dimension includes “materials, strategies and activities that form the basis of instruction” (p. 36). Combined active engagement in all three dimensions would support shared responsibility for developments to support closing the achievement gap.

THE SELF-DECLARATION PROCESS REQUIRES A PROVINCE-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Since 1985 the province has attempted to accurately determine the numbers of FNM learners in this province. Some boards of education have had a long history of collecting data to support the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commissions yearly Education Equity Report. More recently, boards of education are being asked to identify the self-declaration data for two purposes.

The first purpose is by tracking self-declared numbers divisions can be eligible for additional provincial funding from the Ministry of Education’s First Nations and Métis Education Achievement Fund, “This fund is available to Divisions to assist in the implementation of specific initiatives aimed at improving achievement and increasing high school completion rates for FNM students across the province” (Racette, 2012).

The second purpose is to accurately track the achievement of FNM learners in support of the reporting required under the CIAF and *The First Nations and Métis Education Framework*.

PROVINCIAL POLICIES AIMED AT ADDRESSING FNM ACHIEVEMENT ARE GOOD FOR ALL LEARNERS



Boards of education must communicate that these frameworks are designed to support FNM achievement and are also designed to improve the achievement of all students in the school division. They must communicate that FNM education is about all learners. The Canadian Council of Learning (2007) wrote, “The literature suggests that curriculum that reflects both western and Indigenous knowledge is integral to the success of all Canadian students.”

For school divisions who have low FNM student enrolment, we need to question the assumption that Aboriginal education is only for FNM learners, and does not apply to mainstream students. One respondent stated:

As far as I know we don't have any FNM students at our school. We do however; have students from other countries that need to be treated with equal sensitivity. It would be good if we could include in our teachings so that all students could feel accepted and have the confidence that they can achieve just like anyone else.

The researchers assert that the achievement gap illustrates an over-representation of FNM students compared to all other learners across Canada; therefore, the argument that the demographics of a specific community should dictate the integration of Aboriginal content is misplaced.

St. Denis (2010) found that systemic challenges limit the integration of Aboriginal content and perspectives in public education. In her study of Canadian schools, Aboriginal teachers identified that the lack of funding and administrative support for curriculum integration combined with the lack of value placed on Aboriginal content and perspectives by the larger system of education makes the integration of this content limited in many locations. She notes, “A prerequisite for change to occur is the acknowledgement of a problem, but according to many participants, the lack or slow integration of Aboriginal content and perspectives was still not recognized as a problem worthy of attention” (p. 35). The researchers would challenge boards of education to determine the validity of their employee claims that they require additional funding and administrative support for the purposes of curriculum integration, resource acquisition and access to professional development. Given the nearly thirty mandates in the province, it is our view that this claim is an easy out to fully meeting the professional obligations for inclusion and participation in one’s own professional development.



PROVINCIAL POLICIES AIMED AT CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP FOR FNM LEARNERS DO NOT UNDERCUT THE NEEDS OF NEW CANADIANS IN OUR SCHOOLS

This statement is very much in line with the last observation that the researchers made. While not addressed specifically in the survey, a couple of respondents added their concerns that their schools had more immigrant learners than FNM learners, and that, as such, they needed to spend more time meeting those learning needs. System leaders must challenge the perception of “either or” when addressing the learning needs of new immigrant learners and FNM learners. This preferential treatment based on the perceived learning needs for learners is usually unfounded, and largely observational. In our experience, the researchers noted that when challenged to prove the need to privilege immigrant learners, educators are hard pressed to source or support their observations. Research shows that newcomers to our country very quickly are assimilated to the dominant racialized perspectives about who and what FNM people are about. This makes it even more critical for non-Aboriginal educators to teach and inform immigrant students and families about the history, culture, beliefs and value systems of FNM peoples and communities.

In her study of FNM educators, St. Denis found, “It was frustrating for participants when they encountered non-Aboriginal colleagues who used multicultural policies to dismiss and discount the value of Aboriginal content. When their non-Aboriginal colleagues insisted that, “with multiculturalism, we can’t focus only on one culture,” participants saw that Aboriginal content was discounted in favour of existing multicultural curriculum” (p.35). The participants in St. Denis’ study expressed that multicultural concerns were a way to “distract attention from the need for Aboriginal content” (p. 35).

Boards of education need to challenge this sort of “either or” thinking in their school divisions and/or they need to begin to facilitate the research that would support the teachers observations.

AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH FNM PEOPLES RESULTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURALLY COMPETENT SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS

Parental involvement in schools has long been accepted to be one of the factors that inform the identification of an effective school. The involvement of parents in meaningful ways in the education of Aboriginal children is understood to be an important factor in the child’s success in school. Every province has created statements in support of parental involvement, partnership development and the engagement of community members. It is widely understood that these relationships encourage student achievement, facilitate the setting of priorities, and add depth to the governance structures of boards of education. These relationships require the authentic engagement with FNM peoples. The relationships must involve two-way open communications. These relationships need to be respectful of all parties. These relationships must recognize that conflict or disagreements are normal when two worldviews collide. Goulet (2001) found that teachers who build authentic relationships with FNM people are more effective in teaching FNM children and youth. They are more effective

in being able to reach out to community based knowledge keepers and they are more willing to take risks outside of their own comfort zone. They broaden their personal and professional knowledge and they take responsibility for their own cultural competency.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP

System leadership must lay out the foundation and engage in authentic dialogue as to why FNM is mandated in the province of Saskatchewan. Further, they need to ensure a shared understanding of the mandate, the policies and the practice of inclusive educational planning. Boards of education also play a critical role in acknowledging educators who are applying culturally responsive approaches for the benefit of all learners.

Recognizing those educators who engage in culturally appropriate practices encourages further engagement in the school by other staff, and creates a critical mass of educators who can serve as mentors for other educators in the school division. Positive reinforcement of these practices can lead to critical conversations about what's working and should be replicated. The researchers recommend a "made at home" approach to role modelling effective practices in our schools. Shifting the focus from "outside experts" to "expertise within" builds the capacity of the organization to proclaim ownership and responsibility for achievement. The focus on efforts then becomes not only on adopting what works "over there," but what is currently working with our learners within the school division and throughout the province. Cultivating, acknowledging and promoting the expertise within the divisions sends the message that we value innovation right here and that "wisdom lives here." Over time, we may be in a position to be able to identify a consistent set of performance measures which could be adopted system wide.

INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF EDUCATORS IN DETERMINING THE SCHOOL BASED GOALS AIMED AT SUPPORTING FNM ACHIEVEMENT

Boards of education must consistently communicate a priority for all educators to participate in ensuring learning outcomes are identified, yet some educators identify experiencing policy fatigue:

Stop adding more things to our plates. I feel that we get one new area to improve and learn about then before we become fully proficient in that area three more initiatives are added. This makes our head spin. We never get a full grasp on anything. I also feel that at times, we are getting so data driven that we are losing the personal and realistic touch. Not all data should be the be-all and end-all. Data can be wrong. (Survey respondent)

The timing for the CIAF, CIP and LIP coupled with the FNM Education Plan may be perceived as too much too soon for some divisions and for many educators. Boards of education will need to ensure that structures are created to centralize certain aspects of the reporting. Certainly in our view teachers can benefit from being data savvy in regard to using data to align instructional strategies for use in their classrooms. However, teaching work should be protected from having to administer, collate, and interpret school and system data for the purposes of reporting.





THE AUTHENTIC INTEGRATION OF FNM CONTENT

For Aboriginal students to have a sense of belonging in school, teachers must do more than simply introduce Aboriginal content into the curriculum; they must also adopt Aboriginal methods and values so that students may come to know their own identity and potential from within the understanding of their culture (Barnhardt 1990, Leavitt 1994, Lipka 1990). Research suggests that “good teaching” in one cultural context may not transfer to another (Moyle 2005, Nelson-Barber 1999) because “establishing the conditions that engender trust between teachers and students rest in part on understanding particular cultural values” (Nelson-Barber 1999, p.2).

In schools with Aboriginal students, educators struggle with the challenges of providing education that is meaningful and relevant, and at the same time mindful of the outcomes mandated by the provincial government. Efforts at adding Aboriginal content to curricula usually consist of adding units designed to “enrich” existing curriculum content instead of changing the core assumptions, values, and logic of the curriculum itself. Meaningful and relevant education for Aboriginal students, however, requires fundamental changes to create a curriculum that is embedded in Aboriginal worldviews, not only in content, but also in teaching and learning activities that are relevant to the life experiences of Aboriginal students.

Much has been written about the term curriculum integration, which is used in many education circles and can also mean many different things to many different people. Thus the definition itself has several meanings depending on the context and positioning of the person who is using the term. Recently, educator, Yatta Kanu proposed a process to integrating Aboriginal content. In her research she presents five levels of integration of student learning outcomes.

This process has meant identifying certain values, beliefs, practices, issues, and historical events that are important among Aboriginal communities and codified them into learning outcomes for all Aboriginal students integrated across Ministry of Education learning outcomes. For example, the importance of experiential learning or of oral tradition and its role in preserving culture (p.102-103)

At the level of integration of curriculum content and learning resources, it is the common concern of integration which is two-fold:

- To address the void or absence of teaching materials that incorporate the history, values, and perspectives of marginalized groups; and
- To address biases of marginalized groups in textbooks and other learning materials (p. 109).

Often rather than doing both, teachers may not feel that they have the skills or knowledge base to address biases. Kanu states, “Mere addition or exposure to Aboriginal content material and resources without learning experiences that incorporate Aboriginal pedagogical methods would be ineffective for achieving targeted learning outcomes...” (p.111). For example, teaching through narratives or sharing/talking circles reinforces an Aboriginal worldview. Inclusion of this

form of instructional strategies not only reinforces sound professional practice but also builds a sense of pride for Aboriginal students. This is a method that validates oral narrative.

In addressing assessment methodologies or strategies, Kanu emphasizes that what and how we assess our students speaks volumes about what knowledge we deem important. Assessment tools need to be consistent with educational beliefs and values of the groups of learners served for there to be authentic integration. Aboriginal education emphasizes reflection and perfection which is a challenge when standardized tests are used that are culturally irrelevant and/or timed (p.112-13). The conflict that arises is of two differing beliefs around how knowledge is acquired and when knowledge takes place.

From an Anishinabe worldview the Seven Sacred Teachings – wisdom, respect, love, courage, humility, truth and honesty – are foundational in designing the curriculum content (p.114-15). Such a framework is then the basis upon which everything in a learning environment – from classroom decorations to seating arrangement – is reflective of. The underpinning of the curriculum which frames an Aboriginal philosophy is core to creating a learning environment congruent to meeting the cultural values, beliefs and learning styles of the learners.

This research provides a framework for school systems to begin discussions on where we are in relation to authentically integrating Aboriginal content into curriculum and the resources that are required for them to develop, not only on an additive approach but to a social action approach that encompasses all five areas presented by Kanu.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

The strategies outlined in *Closing the Gap* are based on a holistic and integrated approach to improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal learners. The report suggests an overriding issue affecting Aboriginal students' achievement are a lack of awareness among teachers about the learning styles of Aboriginal students. The lack of understanding extends to, the environment in schools, school boards of FNMI cultures, histories, and perspectives.

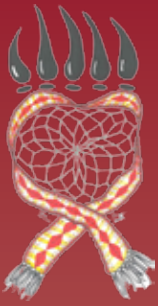
Factors that contribute to student success include teaching strategies that are congruent to Aboriginal learning styles, curriculum that reflects FNMI cultures and perspectives, and a school environment that encourages Aboriginal student and parent/caregiver engagement.

It is also important for educators to understand the First Nations perspective on the school system, which has been strongly affected by residential school experiences and has resulted in intergenerational mistrust of the education system.

It is essential that FNMI students are engaged and feel welcome in school, and that they see themselves represented positively in the curriculum, the school and the community.

Although improvements have been made in some areas, including curriculum, in





recent years greater efforts are needed to ensure that Aboriginal students succeed at a rate comparable to that of other students.

The Ministry of Education also recognizes that K-12 education is only one part of the larger picture for creating a better future for Aboriginal children and youth, and is therefore committed to working with other ministries across government on ways to improve outcomes for FNMI learners.

Culturally relevant pedagogy (Osborne, 2002) is a term which refers to building from students' daily lives and cultures in such a way as to foster ethnic pride and academic success using teaching strategies with which students are comfortable. Osborne provides a framework of nine "signposts" which is compatible with Demmert and Towner's (2003) findings on culturally based education as well as Pewewardy and Hammer's (2003) and Reyhner, Lee and Gabbard's (1993) suggestions on culturally responsive teaching.

This research is particularly useful because as the author points out, schools focus on the area of curriculum integration in relation to content and resources and rarely the areas of integrating learning outcomes, instructional methods, assessment tools, or educational foundation in terms of educational values which includes considerations around classroom environment and the informal curriculum.

DEVELOP A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AIMED AT THE MOST MARGINALIZED IN THE COMMUNITY

Boards of education need to ensure that data are clearly articulated in a variety of ways for a variety of stakeholder groups. In our review, the CIPs did not identify a communications strategy that would show a need to communicate more broadly within the community. These documents are largely designed to aid with funding applications/acquisitions, and communication with other administrators; yet, the parents and community members, those with the most to gain from the closing of the achievement gap may find these document indecipherable at best and/or meaningless.

Sharratt and Fullan (2009) suggest that boards of education "need to construct mechanisms to provide data at all levels of the system that will be used both to provide people with information that improves their practices and to monitor the implementation of the instructional vision" (p. 7). The use of social media and video may support those stakeholders who are challenged by their own literacy levels and/or the culture of the organization.

THE ETHICS OF ASSESSMENT

For some FNM individuals there exists a great deal of suspicion about assessment. Certainly, we must acknowledge that FNM peoples have often been cast in a deficit position in research. As well, we must recognize that some folks may interpret a board of education's attempts to identify FNM learners as another way to gain financial rewards for providing services to FNM peoples. Data are collected on all learners; yet, divisions are eligible for additional project-based funding targeted to FNM learners, which may also benefit non-Aboriginal learners. Some folks in our community may ask, "Who is the data for? How

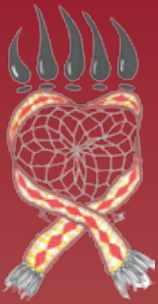
will it benefit my child? Who does the money really go towards serving?” Educational leaders including teachers will need to address a local response to these sorts of questions.

As well, while there has been an emphasis placed on data collection specific to literacy and numeracy, some FNM parents may desire data which speaks to language acquisition or in the case of Arrow Lakes School District in BC the desire to identify whether all learners are understanding and appreciating FNM culture, history and spirituality. As the relationships with FNM are developed and enhanced there may be an opportunity to expand how divisions undertake culturally responsive assessment.

RESEARCHER REMARKS

The research team was disappointed with the low level of participation in the attitudes and perceptions survey. We would like to recommit to the distribution of the survey in a year or so. In lieu of that opportunity we would strongly encourage boards of education to utilize *A Time for Significant Leadership* as a part of their staff development planning. There is a survey of perceptions in that document that could be implemented locally. Our hope is that this type of data would be included in the FNM Education Plan as a sign of commitment on the part of the board of education. Perhaps, the use of the attitudes and values survey would provide accurate information to guide division level planning and accountability.





SECTION IV: A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

The SSBA requested a summary report addressing a framework with a consistent set of achievement measures that are the foundation for the sector to assist in evaluations to assess progress on FNM student achievement including:

- Determine and develop a complete and consistent set of achievement measures;
- Benchmarking of the current state of these measures; and
- The provision of direction(s) to the sector where these measures can be applied and used to eliminate the achievement gap for FNM students.

The review was undertaken in two parts: the first involved a review of policy frameworks for other provinces as a point of comparison to what is done here and the second part of the review was a close examination of performance measures identified by Saskatchewan school divisions.

A Compilation of Selected System Level Performance Measures:

- Increase the participation in FNM self-declaration processes;
- Build leadership capacity for a culture of assessment;
- Build leadership capacity for a culture of achievement for FNM learners;
- Aim to develop a shared language for both assessment and achievement for FNM learners;
- Demonstrate a significant increase in performance of FNM learners meeting provincial standards on reading, writing and math as per provincial assessment strategies;
- Demonstrate significant increases in the numbers of FNM teaching and non-teaching staff in schools reflective of local demographics;
- Significantly increase graduation rates;
- Demonstrate consistency in CIAF and FNM Ed Framework annual reporting;
- Demonstrate significant increase in the numbers of teachers who are utilizing FNM resources (human and material) in the delivery of the provincial curriculum;
- Create or enhance the division's ability to report on assessment obligations under the CIAF;
- Create or enhance the division's ability to report on assessment obligation under the FNM Education Framework;
- Create the shared desire for improvement in the area of FNM achievement;
- Builds on the moral and economic imperative for closing the achievement gap;
- Communicates that this work is a shared responsibility;
- Demonstrates that all educational leaders communicate a consistent and frequent message that FNM education issues are important;
- Does not tolerate "there isn't enough resources/PD..." but asks back, "what will you do differently with what we currently have in place?" or more importantly, "prove it";
- Has a reporting structure that allows the most disadvantaged in our communities to understand, access and comment on progress being made;

- Disaggregate school performance measures;
- Gathers data annually in support of the CIAF and FNM Education Framework;
- Demonstrates and communicates a clear set of goals aimed at closing the achievement gap for FNM learners;
- Affirms and deepens the integration of FNM perspectives in the curriculum;
- Educators consistently practice choosing fair and equitable resources to build their own cultural competency;
- Creates a research foundation for understanding Indigenous knowledge and knowledge transmission approaches;
- Practice relationship building with diverse stakeholder groups;
- Renewal and enhancement of partnership relationships with FNM organizations, and institutions; and
- School-based leadership communicates the consistent message that this work is shared responsibility.

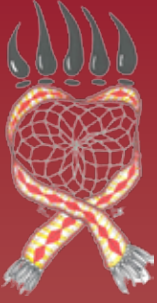


RESEARCHER REMARKS

The language of the CIAF, CIP and LIP have not been adopted consistently by boards of education across the province. The addition of the *Inspiring Success: Building Towards Student Achievement* policy framework is a very new requirement, with boards of education making public the first presentation of disaggregated data this spring. In our view, it may be too soon to determine a consistent set of achievement measures.

The reporting structures in our province provide for the global framework with locally determined priorities based on locally derived data. Aiming to identify a consistent set of achievement measures may not fit the local needs of boards of education. Proposing measures of this sort would also not reflect the process of engaging FNM stakeholders in the meaningful development of system and school based goals and priorities which we view is central to better meeting the learning needs of FNM children and youth. While we present some in the section above, we wonder whether it would be more appropriate for educational leaders to consider the recommendations (p. 96) as one starting place to consider for forward planning.

We would like to offer up these recommended actions that might help guide a variety of educational leaders in their work.



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

For SSBA:

- 1) Ensure that all boards of education are aware of the reporting as required under the CIAF;
- 2) Review the document *A Time for Significant Leadership* with boards of education;
- 3) Support boards of education through the preparation of an ad campaign for the purposes of self-declaration; and
- 4) Assist boards of education in addressing *The Education Act* requirement for confidentiality as it relates to self-declaration with parents and communities.

For trustees:

- 1) Be aware of the reporting cycle for the CIP and the FNM Education Plan;
- 2) Review the history of FNM education in the province;
- 3) Communicate commitment to closing the gap;
- 4) Consider building cultural competency by meeting with local Elders, FNM organizations and institutions;
- 5) Consider the implications for the creation of culturally responsive environments for learning for your division; and
- 6) Consider whether resources are geared to the removal of barriers for the most disadvantaged learners in the division.

For directors of education:

- 1) Prioritize human and financial resources to support First Nations and Métis achievement, data collection and reporting;
- 2) Communicate to all staff the high priority for curriculum actualization aimed at supporting FNM achievement;
- 3) Place a priority on staffing within the division to lead, develop and monitor efforts to support FNM learning.
- 4) Implement *A Time for Significant Leadership* throughout the school division:
 - a) Challenge educators to prove that there is a lack of resources;
 - b) Challenge educators to prove that there is a lack of professional development opportunities; and
 - c) Challenge educators to prove that addressing the achievement gap for FNM learners undermines or limits work with immigrant populations.
- 5) Prepare, implement, and monitor the *Inspiring Success: Building Towards Student Achievement* policy framework;
- 6) Utilize the framework for reporting within the school division initiatives that support FNM learners;
- 7) Ensure a broad awareness from all stakeholder groups about the self-declaration policy:
 - a) Ensure that self-declaration information is shared with all potential

- families in the community;
- b) Ensure that School Community Councils are engaged with facilitating workshops/information sessions with parents and community members about the intentions and goals of the self-declaration process for the purposes of ensuring that all stakeholders understand the purposes for self-declaration; and
 - c) Engage communications on the self-declaration policy through existing partnership relationships.
- 8) Consistently track FNM student numbers in all schools within a school division;
- 9) Disaggregate data specific to FNM learners;
- a) Monitor and report the data in a yearly FNM Education Plan report;
 - b) Initiate an early alert system based on this data to ensure that FNM students are proactively engaged early, and consistently in preventative programs; and
 - c) Inform parents and guardians of FNM learners about the preventative programs.



SECTION V. DIVERSITY OF SCHOOL DIVISION TRUSTEES



Following the review of literature and the review of document the researchers noted that the ethnicity of the division leadership made little difference in regard to the learning outcomes of FNM learners. Regardless of which division or which province we examined, what mattered more was rigid accountability. These educational leaders followed the provincial mandates, applied the frameworks, set the tone for a research driven decision making environment and aligned resources with evidenced need.

While both researchers are committed to a representative workforce, we did not see evidence of the ethnicity of the leader to the outcomes of the learner in our review. We would encourage divisions to continue to develop locally determined targets for the diversity of all employees groups and would challenge existing trustees to consider ways to mentor and recruit a more diverse trustee pool.

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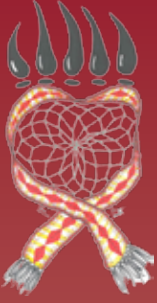
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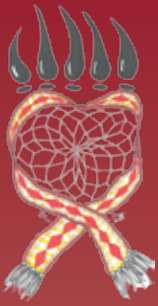
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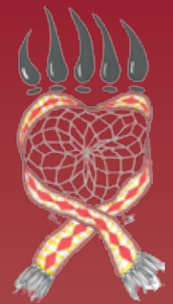
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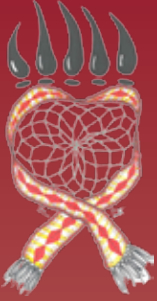
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APPENDIX A



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November 22, 2012

Dear Directors of Education

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association recognizes the challenges in successfully addressing current practices of school divisions. As part of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association strategic plan, in ensuring boards of education are supported in strengthening First Nation and Métis achievement, we are undertaking a research project with the purpose of identifying common challenges and best practices in Aboriginal Education. The research team, Dr. Pete and S. Longman have been hired by the SSBA to undertake the research project.

We are requesting your school division's participation by completing an online survey. To gain a broad perspective of the issue at hand, we would like to further extent this request to your each of the staff members, teachers and non-teaching staff. We ask that this information regarding the survey, be directed to each of your school administrators for each school in your division. Each administrator is asked to complete and forward the survey to each staff member and non-teaching staff. A school is an organization of a specific type called a "social system." This means it is a set of components that interact to meet a goal held by people together (Fiordo, 1990). Teacher-principal attitudes and perceptions can affect student performance outcomes (Thomas, 1997). How positive their attitudes and perceptions are can certainly influence the quality of a school environment. With this in mind, the question arises how to improve and maintain good relations between school administrators, teachers and non-teaching staff in provincial schools.

The survey consists of three sections of 10 questions. The questions are structured to examine divisional attitudes, classroom attitudes and personal perceptions in regards to Aboriginal education.

The survey results will assist in collecting vital information to the above issues and will serve as a means to examine current practices in regards to Aboriginal Education within the province of Saskatchewan. Lastly, the survey results will identify gaps in practices. This information will assist the SSBA in how best to assist school divisions in their professional endeavors. The results from the survey will be shared and presented to the board of trustees throughout the province. Be assured all information shared is strictly to provide and identify supports needed for school divisions to assist in understanding the need for action on First Nation and Metis student achievement.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The on-line survey data will be returned automatically once the survey is completed. The online survey will be available starting November 23, 2012 – December 05, 2012 (mid night). If you require further information please feel to direct your inquiries to Dr. Shauneen Pete (University of Regina) at 306 585-4518.

We appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey and we thank you for all that you do in preparing the young people of our province for a promising future.

Regards,

Dr. Shauneen Pete- Principal Researcher
Sarah Longman- Co-researcher

APPENDIX B



Saskatchewan School Board Association Survey (*the format below has been changed to word from pdf. Changes in formatting has occurred)

Saskatchewan School Boards Association works to ensure boards of education are supported in strengthening First Nation and Métis achievement. The purpose of the survey is to identify common challenges, attitudes/perceptions and best practices in Aboriginal Education.

I identify as a

- First Nations (1)
- Métis (2)
- Other (3)
- no response (4)

Please indicate which school division you currently work with.

- Chinook SD #112 (2)
- Creighton SD #111 (3)
- Saskatoon SD #13 (4)
- Lloydminster SD #99 (5)
- Lloydminster RCSSD #89 (6)
- Living Sky SD #202 (7)
- Saskatchewan Rivers SD #119 (8)
- Prairie Spirit SD #206 (9)
- North East SD #200 (10)
- SunWest SD #207 (11)
- Horizon SD #205 (12)
- Good Spirit SD #204 (13)
- Christ the Teacher RCSSD #212 (14)
- Regina SD #4 (15)
- Regina RCSSD #81 (16)
- Prairie Valley SD #208 (17)
- Northern Lights SD #113 (18)
- Holy Trinity RCSSD #22 (19)
- Prairie South SD #210 (20)
- Holy Family RCSSD #140 (21)
- South East Cornerstone SD #209 (22)
- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools SD #20 (23)
- NorthWest SD #203 (24)
- Englefeld PSSD #132 (25)
- Prince Albert RCSSD #6 (26)
- Conseil des ecoles Fransaskoises SD #310 (27)
- Light of Christ RCSSD #16 (28)
- Ile-a-la-Crosse SD # 112 (29)

I am a

- Teacher (2)
- Administrator (3)
- Staff member (4)

I have been teacher/administrator/staff member for;

- 0-5 (1)
- 6-10 (2)
- 11-15 (3)
- 16-20 (4)
- 21 or more years (5)
- non applicable (6)



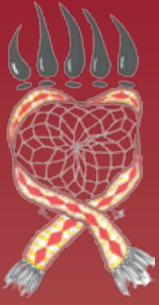
In our school division.....

	Regular (1)	Often (2)	Sometimes (3)	Seldom (4)	Never (5)	Don't Know (6)
Teachers, administrators and non-teaching staff participate in professional development on Aboriginal Education (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
we request our students self-declare their ethnicity (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
we have a clear strategic outcome with an emphasis on improving the achievement results for Aboriginal learners (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
actively gathers data specifically to Aboriginal student achievement (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
our achievement data is shared publicly via our web site (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Integrating Aboriginal Content In my classroom.....

	Regularly (1)	Often (2)	Sometimes (3)	Seldom (4)	Never (5)
I use print, video and film, visual art, and other resources created by First Nations and Métis people (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I rely on contact with the First Nations and Métis community through cultural liaisons, parents and community leaders, keeping in mind that different people hold varying levels and diverse areas of expertise (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I choose work, such as a piece of literature or art, or an activity for integration, teachers give careful consideration to voice and source, intent and complexity (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I incorporate an integrative approach encourages curriculum crossovers and interdisciplinary teaching and learning (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Nations and Métis Elders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





are invited into the school and classrooms to work with learners and teacher (5)					
Storytellers are invited into classrooms and storytelling is used as a teaching tool (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Novels, stories, poems, plays and films by First Nations and Métis writers and artists are used (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Nations and Métis parents, liaisons and community leaders are invited into the school and classrooms to work with learners and teachers (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Care is taken in the selection of pictures, photographs and other First Nations and Métis images used in teaching and the school environment (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Nations languages are integrated into teaching and classroom environments (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I create my own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>resources for integrating Aboriginal content and perspective (11)</p> <p>I ensure resources and materials used for integrating First Nations and Métis content and perspective are evaluated for appropriateness (12)</p>	○	○	○	○	○
--	---	---	---	---	---





Please respond to each statement as it applies to you. At this point I feel I.....

	Strongly Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Disagree (4)
have a broad range of knowledge and understanding of the major historical shifts affecting First Nations and Métis people. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have an understanding of the cultures/languages, histories, worldviews of First Nations and Métis people. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
show generosity in sharing knowledge, providing support to others (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
feel competent in my knowledge of protocols and practices in working with Elders/Knowledge Keepers and resource people (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
competent in selecting appropriate and accurate materials and classroom resources that represent First Nations and Métis people in a non-stereotypical manner. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
comfortable in asking questions about First Nations and Métis culture, history and practices. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

demonstrate and model culturally responsive instructional practices. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
infuse First Nations and Métis content and worldviews authentically into all areas of the curriculum (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
understand the necessity of using culturally appropriate assessment and evaluation tools for First Nation and Métis students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
understand the Ministry of Learning's mandate on Aboriginal education (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



The following question will give you an opportunity to identify your specific professional needs. Please answer openly and truthfully. What I need from my school division is.....

Thank you for completing the survey.



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