

# **Research Paper on Aboriginal Curriculum in Ontario**

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2004**

## Introduction

I never learned about my own [Aboriginal] history, culture, values nor my language, therefore there is a big gap in my understanding of who I am as an Aboriginal person. I cannot pass on cultural knowledge to my own children, and who is going to teach them if the school doesn't?

*(Aboriginal parent, interview, Matheson, Ontario, April 11, 2004)*

When we were learning about 'pioneers' in school, the teacher said that when pioneers came to Canada, Native people lived here. When I asked if the Native peoples' land was taken away, she said 'we'll talk about that later', and we never talked about it again.

*(Grade 4 Aboriginal student, interview, Sudbury, Ontario, April 6, 2004)*

If the school would have respected the culture and history of my people, it would have been part of my education. I wanted to learn about my people because I need to understand who I am. But that did not happen; I am now a high school drop out.

*(Aboriginal youth, interview, Timmins Ontario, April 10 2004)*

I never learned about the real history, culture and traditions of Aboriginal people until I came to university... If I would have learned about my people in elementary school, I think I would have a deeper sense of pride, and I believe I would have taken education more seriously, knowing that it is so important in our empowerment and healing as a people.

*(Aboriginal university student, interview, Sudbury, Ontario, April 8, 2004)*

The stories speak for themselves. Since European contact, First Nations peoples have been deprived of opportunities to learn about their own culture, history and language in the colonial education systems. Attempts to eradicate First Nations cultures and languages were systematically carried out through residential schools whose goals were to assimilate First Nations children. The results are evident in the inability of our current generation to pass on their First Nations teachings and worldview. Foreign imposed education systems were strategically used as a way to 'Europeanize' the First Nations peoples and the children were seen as the easiest targets to accomplish this end. These systems ensured that future generations would no longer relate to their culture, language and identity of their ancestors. According to the Minister's National Working Group report (2002):

When we examine First Nations education historically, a pattern emerges that consists of a system of education that for the most part has been imposed on First Nations students with **blatant disregard for First Nations languages, cultures and collective knowledge and wisdom.**

It is well documented that in their attempts to eradicate First Nations cultures and languages, the Canadian government used the education system to assimilate First Nations children, so that traditional teachings would not be passed on to future generations.

### **History of First Nations Education**

Residential schools were set up under the guise of ‘civilizing and educating’ the ‘Indian’ child. The real results were the destruction of culture and language. The negative impacts and cycles of abuse are still felt today among individuals, families, communities and Nations. Children were forbidden to practice their culture and language. One parent spoke passionately of her educational experience:

I was raised in a residential school, a place where all was foreign – the language that we were forced to speak, the people who were raising us, the building that we lived in, and what we were learning in school. I never heard any mention of how my people had lived on this land since time immemorial, or how proud of a people we once were, or how spirituality had been the basis of our way of life. Everything in the residential school was foreign...

*(Aboriginal parent, interview, Timmins, Ontario, April 10 2004)*

Following the residential school era, federal day schools were established so that First Nations children could attend schools on reserves. The federal day schools continued with a deficit approach to First Nations education and did not include First Nations cultures and languages in the school programming. Children learned only non-Native history, culture, values and language. The impacts were the continued devaluing of the First Nations world and pervasive attacks on the First Nations sense of self. Eber Hampton (1995) sums up this intent when he states “It must be straightforwardly realized that education, as currently practiced, is cultural genocide. It seeks to brainwash the Native child, substituting [it with] non-Native knowledge, values and identity” (p.35).

Beginning in the 1950s, there was a push by the federal government to integrate Aboriginal students into provincial schools. The federal government revised the Indian Act in 1951 to allow the federal government to purchase education services from provincial education authorities. “In 1951, a new Indian Act formalized the general aim of the federal government as integration of Indians into Canadian society. The place of Indian children in provincial schools was the principal means of achieving this goal” (Persson, 1986, p.157) and “The schools and their teachers remained alien, the representatives of an external culture being imposed upon Native peoples” (Barman et al, 1986, p.15). By the 1980s, almost half of First Nations students were attending provincial school systems. Provincial school programming was not set up to meet the needs of First Nations students; curriculum guidelines were based upon educating non-Native students. Thus (until recently) there had been an exclusion of First Nations content in the provincial curriculum; however the actual implementation is not occurring on a significant basis. Inclusion of First Nations curriculum content in the mainstream curriculum is happening in a limited and piecemeal basis.

The standardized provincial curriculum lacks understandings and pedagogical methods crucial to effecting a wholistic education as defined and grounded by traditional Nishnaabe lifeways. A First Nations curriculum that is *sui generis*, that is, “ a thing of its

own kind” serves the purposes of its writers just as the provincial curriculum serves the purposes of its writers. (Corbiere, 2000, p.117)

In the 1970s, following the *Indian Control of Indian Education (ICIE)* position paper by the National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations), the federal government began transferring reserve schools to local ‘control’. As was stated in the ICIE paper, First Nations expected their schools to provide a relevant education to their children. “Aboriginal students require curricula that incorporate their holistic perspective...Such curricula would assist Aboriginal youth to achieve academically within their cultural frame of reference while adding to world knowledge” (Smith, 2001, p.86).

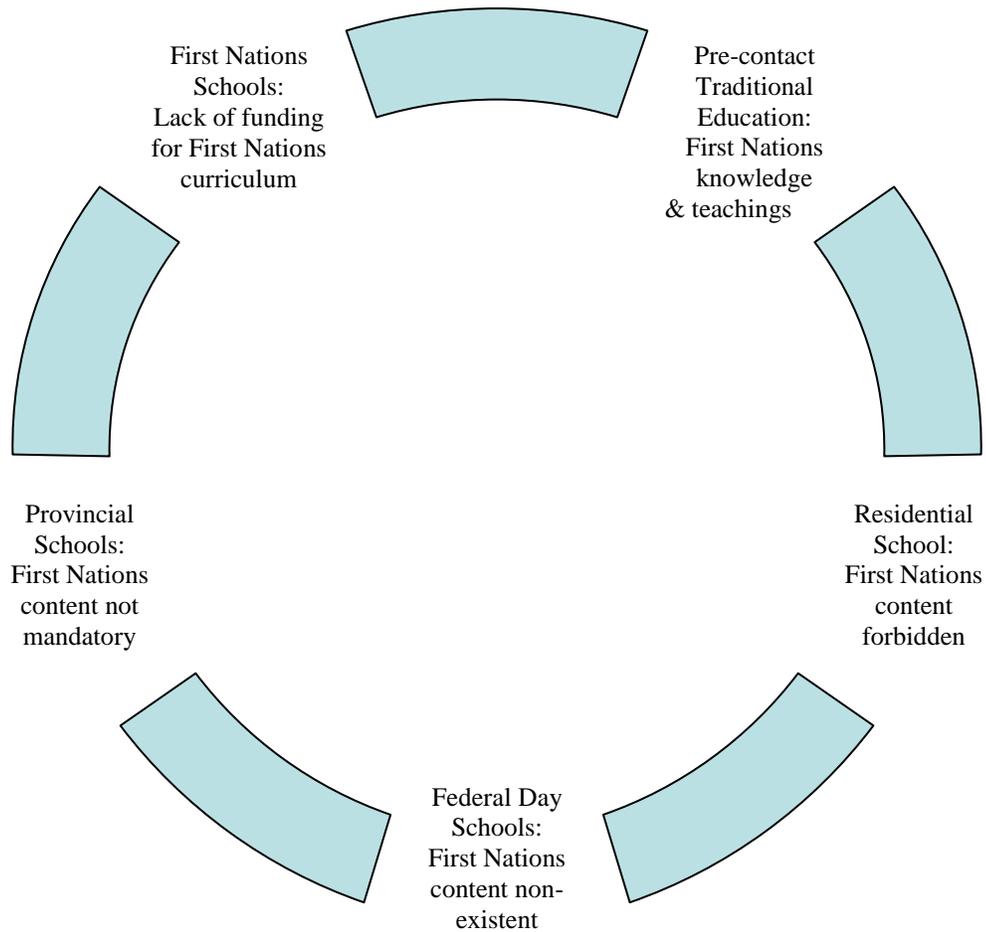
Under the notion of ‘transfer of control’, First Nations communities inherited these federal schools and only took over the administration. Transfer of ownership only meant that communities were taking over schools that were insufficient to begin with. Additional funding was not provided for transfer development and First Nations were not able to include Native content. This lack of financial resourcing to develop Native curriculum meant that First Nations become inheritors of a ‘colonial’ system. Only recently through the efforts and sacrifices of Aboriginal educators/leaders has there been positive change (innovative curriculum development). A major challenge remains to be the lack of funding for Aboriginal curriculum development.

First Nations have been required to sign funding agreements where they must follow provincial standards and guidelines. These agreements only ensure the continued deprivation of First Nations learning. Non-Aboriginal knowledge has been built within the school system and the exclusion of First Nations cultural content in the curriculum is still the norm. This is truly unfortunate for our students who attend these schools and have no affirmation of their identity. A majority of First Nations people have been robbed of the opportunity to learn their own traditional knowledge and continue to carry a void or gap of traditional knowledge, thus cannot relate to their culture and identity.

The core of First Nations cultures is spirituality. Prior to contact, First Nations governance and education systems were infused with spirituality. Spirituality was paramount to all that they did; “... the identity of an Aboriginal student is based in his or her spirituality... One’s spirituality is the inner resource that facilitates knowing oneself, one’s surroundings, and finding meaning for oneself in connection and relation to those surroundings” (Doige, 2003, p.146-7).

Just as education had been used in the past to destroy First Nations cultures and languages, education can now be used to build, restore and revive First Nations cultures and languages. The history, values and beliefs of First Nations peoples can be valued through the schools in which First Nations children attend. “Education can enhance survival of First Nations people only if it contributes to identity development through learning our languages, our cultural traditions, and our spiritual beliefs” (Longboat, 1994, p.39-40). Only then will our people come ‘full circle’ in reviving traditional aboriginal knowledge. In conclusion the following model reviews the history of education as presented in the prior discussion.

## Historical Overview on Teaching of Aboriginal Content



### **Scope of Research Paper:**

This research paper will:

- provide an overview of First Nations-specific curriculum,
- identify the curriculum needs, barriers and challenges of First Nations,
- examine examples of First Nations best practices,
- explore cost estimates for curriculum development and
- make recommendations to improve the current situation in the area of First Nations curriculum

### **Methodology**

The methods utilized to gather the data for this research paper include the following:

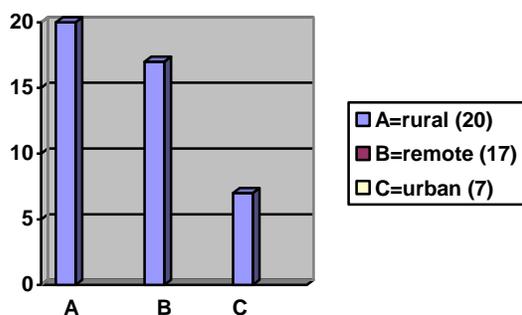
- A literature review of relevant documents on First Nations curriculum (See Appendix A which contains a bibliography of references used for the paper).

- A questionnaire survey was conducted with First Nations schools in Ontario. (See one-page questionnaire in Appendix B.) Forty four schools participated in the survey. The survey results are presented in the next section of this paper.
- Research on best practices in First Nations curriculum was conducted on national, provincial, regional and local levels; information was collected by telephone, fax and the internet. The results of the research on best practices is included in the latter part of this report.
- Interviews were carried out with two educators, two youth, and two parents, all of whom are from First Nations communities in Ontario. The interviews were qualitative and open-ended in nature. Participants were asked if they had been received First Nations content teaching in their education. The input of participants is integrated throughout this report.
- A telephone survey of twenty randomly selected provincial high schools in Ontario was conducted. The schools were asked if they offered Native Studies courses, and if they did, they were asked what courses were offered. The results of this survey are included in the latter section of this report.

### **First Nations School Survey**

Questionnaires were faxed out to principals of approximately 80 First Nations schools in Ontario. Over half (44) of the questionnaires were completed and returned (See list of participating schools in Appendix C). The participating schools represent a cross-section of First Nations communities. 17 schools are in isolated and remote areas; 20 schools are in rural road-accessible areas; and 7 schools are located in communities close to urban centres. 6 of the 44 schools were at the secondary level and 38 schools were elementary schools. The following graph illustrates the composition described above.

#### **Participating First Nations Schools**



The results of the research illustrate the challenges faced by First Nations schools in offering First Nations specific content. Despite lack of funding for curriculum development, the schools are still attempting to teach First Nations studies to some degree.

When asked if their school had some form of First Nations studies courses or units of study with Native specific content, 35 out of 44 reported that some form of Native studies was offered in their school. It was noted by the participants that First Nations content was limited in regards to actual written curriculum and that Native studies was not offered on a consistent basis. It was

also determined that there was a general lack of support materials and no First Nations-specific textbooks for students.

The type of Native curriculum offered at the schools was reported as:

66% (n29) – Aboriginal knowledge which include world view, values, Grandfather teachings, legends etc.  
 59% (n26) – Aboriginal history covering Canada-First Nations historic relations, treaties, Indian Act, etc  
 55% (n24) – Aboriginal skills including craft making, traditional cooking, art – painting, sculpture, woodwork, etc  
 55% (n24) – Land based activities which include outdoor program, camping, trapping, maple syrup sapping, etc.  
 41% (n18) – Aboriginal spirituality including smudging, ceremonies, sacred teachings, etc

Note: Number on left side indicates percentages of schools which offer Native curriculum; the number in brackets indicate the actual number of schools

Other identified curriculum content included: roles of local leaders and community workers, contemporary Aboriginal authors and artists, alcohol and drug abuse awareness, and traditional roles of men and women.

Eleven (11) schools stated that they did not have Native courses nor units of study in their curriculum. Reasons given for not offering Native studies were, in order of priority:

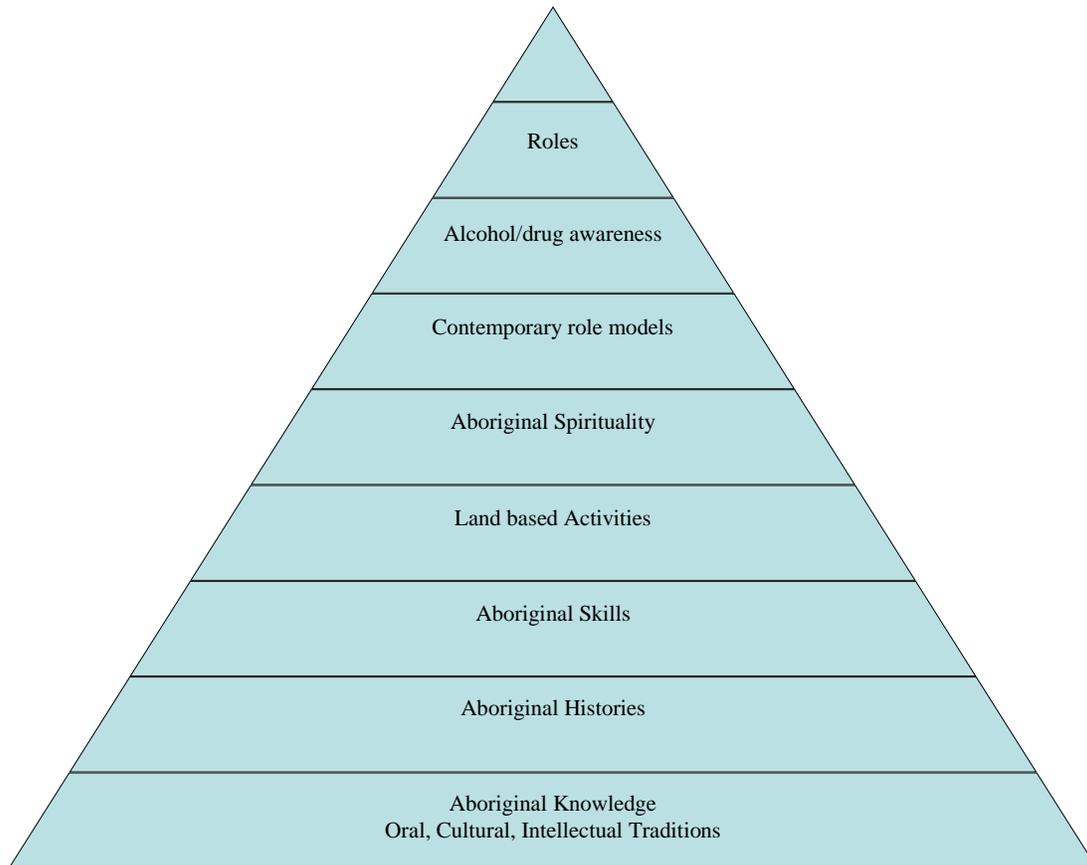
1. No curriculum
2. Lack of materials, textbooks, references with Native content
3. No funding to develop and implement Native studies
4. Lack of teachers with Native studies knowledge and expertise.

Other reasons for not offering Native studies were:

5. lack of time to develop curriculum and materials
6. all materials have to be locally developed and created by teachers
7. great need for expertise in Native content
8. Native studies is sporadic and self-generated
9. lack of funding to support curriculum development.

The model below is an overview of First Nations curriculum content. This represents the variation of inclusion that was represented in the surveyed schools. The levels represent the themes that emerged from the data in respect to First Nations cultures, languages, traditions and worldview. First Nation schools truly value their original 'ways of life' but do not have the resources to make this a reality for the Native student in his/her learning.

## Overview of Aboriginal Curriculum Content



The diagram is organized to illustrate the areas of First Nations curriculum which are being offered in participating schools beginning at the base of diagram. For example, 29 schools reported that they promote First Nations knowledge such as world view, values, Grandfather teachings, and legends. Twenty six (26) schools stated that Aboriginal history is a priority which includes Canada-First Nations historic relations, treaties and the Indian Act. First Nations skills such as craft making, traditional cooking and art was reported as being taught in 24 schools. Twenty four (24) schools reported that land based activities are carried out including outdoor programming, camping, trapping and maple syrup sapping. First Nations spirituality which includes smudging, ceremonies and sacred teachings is being offered in 18 schools. Other content areas reported include contemporary role models, alcohol/drug awareness, and roles of men and women.

### School Needs

The schools identified their needs in regards to First Nations content programming. Their needs, in order of priority, are as follows:

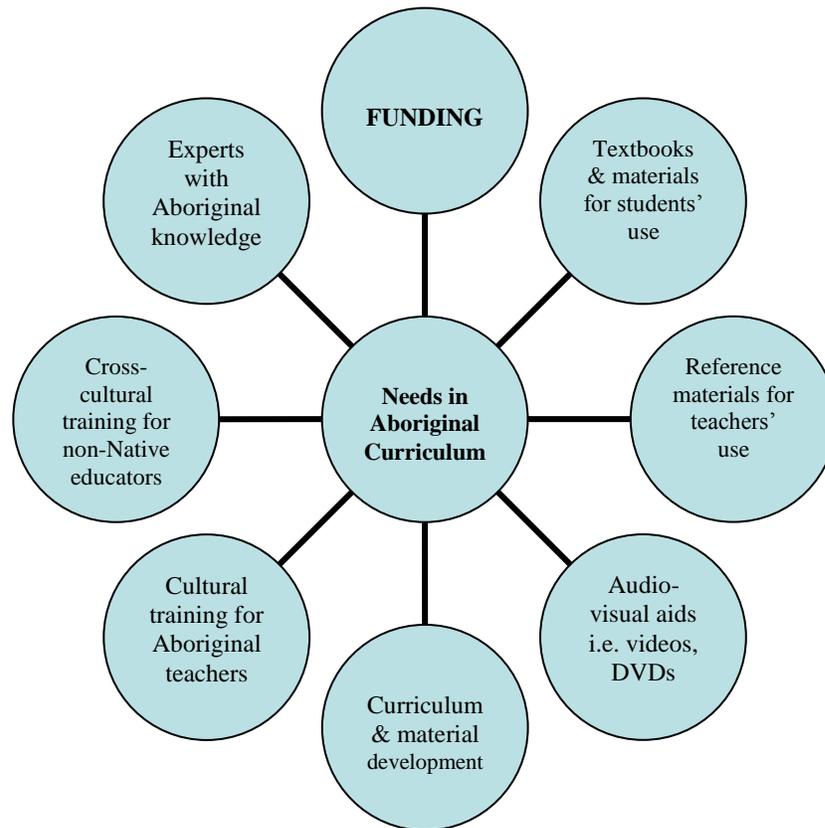
43 – funding specifically for Native Studies development and implementation
41 – textbooks, materials for students’ use
40 – reference materials for teachers’ use
38 – videos and DVDs on First Nations content
36 – curriculum development
30 – cultural training for First Nations teachers in regards to content, cultural teaching techniques
28 – cross cultural training for non-Native teachers and administrators
25 – teachers and resource people with traditional First Nations knowledge
Note: Number on left side indicates number of surveyed schools (out of 44) indicating needs

Other needs are identified as:

- updated and relevant resource materials
- equipment and supplies for hands-on learning
- classroom space for Native studies
- Aboriginal pride days
- Funding to translate materials
- Funding to develop curriculum
- Funding to conduct research for curriculum
- Funding for culture-based activities on the land
- Healing circles, talking and sharing circles
- Complete revision of current curriculum
- Bicultural program

The following web illustrates the needs in First Nations curriculum development and implementation:

## What do First Nations Need?



The needs identified by participating schools all depend on **FUNDING**. In order to carry out any of the above-noted activities, the availability of financial resources for First Nations curriculum development is the determining factor!

Specific needs which hinder the development of Aboriginal content curriculum have been identified in the First Nations school survey. The major needs include curriculum development, resources/materials, cultural training and First Nations expertise, all of which will not be met unless adequate funding is provided.

### Curriculum development:

Ideally, education should meet the needs of Aboriginal people rather than Aboriginal people meeting the needs of the education systems. Realistically and historically the latter has remained true and continues into today. Aboriginal research has repeatedly affirmed that “the First Nations seek the development of more spiritually based, more natural, and culturally whole approaches to education” (AFN, 1988, vol 1. p.73). Government reports have also documented the need of Aboriginal content curriculum:

The integration of First Nations knowledge and wisdom into curricula and pedagogy in education systems, both in First Nations and provinces and territories, will provide First Nations

learners with a positive learning environment and encourage student success. (INAC, 2002)

The lack of Aboriginal curriculum has also been acknowledged in government documents. The Auditor General's Report 2000 expresses that "the Department does not have the necessary assurance that First Nations students are receiving culturally appropriate education" (Auditor General's Report, 2000, p.45). Furthermore, other government reports such as the Minister's working group report recommend that "...Canada must work together with all stakeholders to ensure that Indigenous Knowledge is respected and promoted in all funded educational programs and services" (INAC, 2002).

### Resources/materials

All First Nation schools in Ontario identified a critical need for educational resources which contain accurate and relevant content about Aboriginal people, their history and culture. In the First Nations school survey, it was commented that "We need books which reflect Native lifestyle and values" (principal). Another principal expressed that:

The classroom teachers are in need of more classroom resources –materials need to be developed which are ready for classroom use. Teachers are always in need of resources such as books, videos, etc. which would enhance the teaching and learning experience of the students. We also need an in depth resource library of material which is specifically community based. (*principal, survey, 2004*)

Accurate and relevant information about First Nations people in books is seriously lacking. This major concern is expressed by an First Nations student as "I feel sick when our class has to read something about Native people that I know is not true. How am I supposed to argue against something that has been published? Of course, everyone will believe what has been written". The AFN's national study found that:

Textbooks now in use generally ignore the First Nations contribution to Canadian history and are full of inaccuracies. These messages foster internal conflicts in First Nations students. The contributions that First Nations have made to the development of Canada are still not incorporated into all school subjects. Rather, cultural programs are isolated very often into an historical context with no emphasis given to the philosophies and values that are essential to the development of a strong First Nations identity and traditional intellect. (AFN, 1988, vol 1, p.78)

Published books which contain false information on First Nations people are a major problem. It certainly a dangerous situation when thousands of First Nations students are exposed to the inaccurate information which leads to negative attitudes about their people and themselves as First Nations people.

The same concern is reiterated in the report by the Minister's National Working Group which states that "provincial and territorial authorities need to be aware constantly of the portrayal of First Nations and First Nations history in textbooks and learning materials to ensure that young

Canadians receive accurate information and knowledge about First Nations” (INAC, 2002). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples report that Aboriginal specific materials be integrated into all school systems and that partnerships between governments and First Nations educators is essential. The report recommends that:

Federal, provincial and territorial governments collaborate with Aboriginal governments, organizations and educators to develop or continue developing innovative curricula that reflect Aboriginal cultures and community realities, for delivery... at all grade levels of elementary and secondary schools; in schools operating under Aboriginal control; and in schools under provincial and territorial jurisdiction. (RCAP, vol 3, chapter 5, section 3.2)

Schools have a vital role in promoting awareness by providing the students with accurate knowledge about Aboriginal people. Teaching children about First Nations people will have a profound impact on building bridges between First Nations and Canadian society.

#### Cultural training and First Nations expertise

In First Nations schools, resource people who have traditional knowledge are necessary to implement Native studies programming. “Among the major concerns reported by First Nations to the Department are those related to culture. These include chronic shortages of qualified teachers for native language instruction and native studies, lack of culturally appropriate curricula and funding shortfalls” (Auditor General, p. 4-14).

First Nations schools report that cultural education which meets specific local needs is still not implemented in a meaningful way. Curriculum which focuses on the Aboriginal connection to the land is needed. “The cultural training needed is for knowledge to be passed for traditional medicine and plant remedies, as well as tanning hides, fish netting, hunting, trapping, land mapping and rules of terrain needed” (principal). Another comment from a First Nations school principal states that “there needs to be projects developed in our First Nation communities where outpost camps are built for the purpose of taking young and old on camping trips”. There was also concern expressed that the school budgets do not recognize the expertise of local elders and resource people. Key aspects of First Nations curriculum must be taught by local experts who are fully knowledgeable in the traditions.

The First Nations schools reaffirmed the need for quality trained First Nations teachers (culturally and provincial standards). One principal noted that:

We need strong teachers that are from the communities in which they serve, that speak the language – know their traditions and are interested in bringing their skills/ knowledge into the school and the community. We need resources that our non-native teachers can use and understand especially at the high school level. With the new Ontario curriculum we need resources that will assist teachers to bring Native content into all subjects. (*principal, survey, 2004*)

In addition to the need for more First Nations teachers, support for non-Native teachers is necessary so that they can incorporate First Nations content into the curriculum. Cultural training and appropriate resource materials are required for both Native and non-Native teachers.

### Funding

Lack of funding to support Aboriginal curriculum development is the major barrier to the advancement of Native studies. “Lack of funding resources has been [a] ... deterrent to developing systematic, integrated Aboriginal curricula” (RCAP, v3, c5, s3.2). The Minister’s national working group report recommended that the Minister and First Nations identify “costs of a quality First Nations education” which would include “culturally relevant curricula for all subject areas that are developed and approved by First Nations” and “the development of culturally appropriate pedagogical methodologies and evaluation” (INAC, 2002). This research paper is only one step to achieving this goal.

### **Rationale for First Nations curriculum**

Aboriginal people need a solid Aboriginal knowledge foundation in their early years, so that they have a sense of belonging and a positive identity as Aboriginal people. If they are deprived of this very important foundation, they will be lost, and most tend to wander all their lives.

*(Aboriginal educator, interview, Sudbury, Ontario, April 5, 2004)*

Externally imposed education systems have damaged the sense of identity among First Nations people. Parents who were dispossessed with no opportunity to learn about their own peoples’ culture and language find themselves in a difficult situation (unable to teach their children the ‘traditional ways’). Traditional knowledge is paramount to understanding one’s First Nations identity, as it is “a discrete system of knowledge with its own philosophical and value base. Aboriginal peoples hold the belief that traditional knowledge derives from the Creator and is spiritual in essence. It includes ecological teachings, medical knowledge, common attitudes toward Mother Earth and the Circle of Life, and a sense of kinship with all creatures” (RCAP, v3, c5, s7). Traditional knowledge forms the foundation of a First Nations person’s life, and it has been found that “cultural education programs provide the foundation for the child’s pride, self-perception and identity” (AFN, vol 1, p.107).

For over thirty years, the First Nations people have repeatedly articulated that:

Indian children must have the opportunity to learn their language, history and culture in the classroom. Curricula [must] recognize the contributions which the Indian people have made to Canadian history and life. (NIB, 1972, p28)

The First Nations youth of today are seeking meaning in life; they are searching for an identity. If First Nations children do not receive Native-specific knowledge in school, most will never have the opportunity to learn about their own heritage. Research has reiterated the importance of fostering a positive identity through education. The Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples report affirms that:

Elders expressed deep concern to [RCAP] Commissioners about the current state of education. While they do not reject participation in Canadian education, they question the exclusion of traditional knowledge and its methods of transmission. They see that young people and adults emerge from school with a confused sense of Aboriginal identity and without the basic cultural knowledge to participate fully in the traditions of their society. (RCAP, v3, c5, s7)

Schools have a vital role in providing the opportunity for First Nations people to learn about their own history, culture and language. Schools should not only offer First Nations content to First Nations students but also to non-Native students as well.

Reports conducted by the federal government have also recognized the critical need for incorporating First Nations content into the school curriculum. The Minister's national working group paper states that:

Centuries of commerce, cultural evolution and social interaction among First Nations have produced a vast body of knowledge worthy of inclusion in all schools and post-secondary institutions as valid and important learning material. (INAC, 2002)

Countless studies and reports from First Nations groups have confirmed the necessity of First Nations specific curriculum to prepare students for successful lives. "With a solid grounding in one's own culture and positive identity, students become much higher achievers in all areas of education and life" (AFN, vol 1, p.73).

When First Nations people refer to 'quality of education', they are talking about an education system which meets their needs. As First Nations peoples living in today's world, traditional knowledge and skills are just as, if not more, important as academic and non-Native knowledge. The Assembly of First Nations' *Tradition and Education* report states that "*Quality* [of education] is a value-laden term that must be understood within the context of cultural values, belief systems, and educational philosophy of the First Nations" (AFN, vol 1, p. 71) and that "A high quality First Nations education system based on the First Nation's traditional and cultural values is the key to achieving an acceptable and lasting quality of life for First Nations" (AFN, vol 1, p.73).

Numerous reports such as the *Auditor General's Report 2000* fully support the need for First Nations specific education, as it states "we believe that success in providing education to Indian students can be achieved only if their needs and aspirations are appropriately identified and served by an education system that is designed to meet them" (Auditor General, 2000, p 4-22).

In 1972, the *Indian Control of Indian Education* paper clearly and explicitly expressed the role of education is to 'provide Native students with knowledge of their own culture and language, as well as preparing them with skills of mainstream society'. Sixteen years later, the Assembly of First Nations' report on a national education study reaffirmed the same position:

First Nations indicate that the goals should be two-fold: (1) education should prepare children to gain the necessary skills for successful living and to contribute to the community, and (2)

education should reinforce the student's cultural identity. The teaching of First Nations heritage and the learning of traditional skills must advance in conjunction with academic skills. (AFN, vol 1, p.72)

and further states that:

Education provides the setting in which First Nations children can develop the fundamental attitudes and values which have an honoured place in First Nations' traditions and cultures. Education shapes the behaviour of First Nations children. Therefore, education should be shaped by those values which are most esteemed in First Nations cultures. (AFN, vol 1, p.71)

The *Auditor General's Report (2000)* noted that it is INAC's responsibility "to ensure that Indian children receive an education that is comparable to that of other Canadian children, without neglecting their cultural needs". The federal government's report titled *Gathering Strength*, which was intended to address education and other issues, developed an integrated plan for remedial action to improve the quality and cultural relevance of education. Aboriginal people are still waiting for the 'integrated', 'remedial' and 'action' parts of the plan.

#### Education for non-Aboriginal people

All Nations in the world have their own cultures and languages. First Nations peoples have a rich and complex heritage that has long been ignored and subordinated. The RCAP report extensively stresses the importance of culture to the well being of First Nations people.

Each nation also has its own body of knowledge that encompasses language, belief systems, ways of thinking and behaving, ceremonies, stories, dances and history. Through thousands of years in the Americas, nations have evolved intricate relationships with their lands and resources. While western academics and intellectuals have begun to give some credence to Aboriginal understandings of the universe, including ecological knowledge in particular, the gatekeepers of western intellectual traditions have repeatedly dismissed traditional knowledge as inconsequential and unfounded. They have failed to recognize that their approach to knowledge building is also defined by culture and that Aboriginal intellectual traditions operate from a different but equally valid way of construing the world. Aboriginal people have particular difficulty with the western notion that knowledge can be secular or objective, divorced from spiritual understanding and deeply imbedded values and ethics. (RCAP, v3, c5, s7)

First Nations cultures and intellectual traditions have much to offer the world, however the deplorable lack of knowledge by general Canadian society about First Nations peoples has led to negative stereotypes and attitudes. These harmful perceptions of First Nations peoples has led to a sad state of continuous and subtle racism which is experienced by First Nations people of all ages, most affectedly the children. First Nations peoples in Canada will continue to suffer the damaging effects of racism, until a massive campaign of public education is undertaken.

Public education is essential in confronting the problems posed by ignorance and misconceptions regarding our place in Canadian history and the nature of our rights. All Canadians should have the knowledge required to understand our situation, as well as the knowledge that what we have sought all along is mutual respect and coexistence. (RCAP, v5, c4)

A limited and misguided understanding of First Nations issues has prevented the achievement of reconciliation and a renewed relationship between non-Native and First Nations peoples in Canada. It has been expressed in government and First Nations reports that schools have a vital role in making monumental changes in these relationships. Through schools, society can become better informed about the richness and diversity of First Nations peoples. It is through school systems that the relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies can be fostered.

The AFN's national study report stated that, "First Nations agree that non-aboriginal children also should be exposed to this type of curriculum so that current misconceptions and stereotypes about First Nations can be dispelled" (AFN, vol 1, p. 78). The Minister's working group further emphasized that "In addition, non-First Nations learners will have an opportunity to develop a more respectful and balanced view of Canadian history and culture, with a place for First Nations in it" (INAC, 2002).

### **Ontario Situation**

This section will provide an overview of First Nations studies in the provincial curriculum. The levels of education which are included in this research include pre-school, elementary, secondary and post secondary levels.

#### **Pre-School Education**

First Nations communities which have pre-school education programs follow the provincial early childhood education guidelines. Although aspects of child development are included, there is no First Nations specific programming available. There are a few communities which have federal Head Start Programs which incorporate First Nations content, traditional knowledge, cultural values and language. Many communities had applied to establish Head Start Programs in their First Nations, however lack of funding continues to be the main deterrent in setting up more First Nations based pre-school education. The findings do support that First Nations knowledge, traditions and values are still represented in the curriculum with a limited scope. Without adequate funding to develop resources that are culturally relevant and provide release time to employees, the situation will remain the same.

#### **Elementary Level**

In 1975, the Ministry of Education developed *People of Native Ancestry* [PONA]: *A Resource Guide for the Primary and Junior Divisions* which provided curriculum units and strategies to present material. The Native Studies curriculum guideline for the intermediate division was completed in 1981. However, it is important to note that the guidelines were not made mandatory in provincial schools. Both guides contained useful and relevant information for teachers,

however the guides are now outdated. Since the development of the PONA documents, there have not been updated or recent guidelines at the elementary level. During the time of this research, the Ministry reported that a review of the Social Studies (1-6) and History (7-8) is currently being undertaken and Aboriginal input was being solicited. The review will involve incorporation of First Nations content into the provincial curriculum and plans are underway to implement the revised curriculum (which will be mandatory for all Ontario schools in September 2005).

### Secondary Level

The Ministry of Education has developed and implemented Native Studies curriculum at the secondary level. It is important to note that the courses are available but actual delivery of the courses are only determined by numbers of students who enroll for the courses. If the numbers are not sufficient, then the courses are not offered.

In Grades 9 and 10, the program offers two Native Studies courses. The grade 9 course entitled *Expressing Aboriginal Cultures* focuses on the various art forms used by Aboriginal peoples to communicate information about their cultures. The grade 10 course entitled *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada* covers twentieth century history and contemporary issues with an emphasis on Aboriginal peoples.

In Grades 11 and 12, a total of eight Native studies courses are offered. There are six courses in grade 11 and two courses in grade 12. The grade 11 courses focus on how various groups of Aboriginal peoples define themselves and their visions of the future. The grade 12 courses explore political, social, economic and cultural issues relevant to First Nations peoples in Canada and the rest of the world. Below the chart illustrates a summary of Native studies courses:

Grade	Course Name	Type	Credit value	Course Code	Pre-requisite
9	Expressing Aboriginal Cultures	Open	1	NAC10	None
10	Aboriginal Peoples in Canada	Open	1	NAC20	None
11	English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices	University	1	NBE3U	Grade 10 English
11	Current Aboriginal Issues in Canada	university college	1	NDA3M	NAC20, open, or grade 10 Canadian History
11	Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society	College	1	NBV3C	NAC20, open, or Grade 10 Canadian History
11	English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices	College	1	NBE3C	Grade 10 English
11	Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society	workplace	1	NBV3C	NAC20, open, or grade 10 Canadian History
11	English: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices	workplace	1	NBE3E	Grade 10 English
12	Aboriginal Governance	university college	1	NDG4M	Any grade 11 Native Studies university or

					college preparation course
12	Issues of Indigenous Peoples in a Global Context	university college	1	NDW4M	Any grade 11 Native Studies university or college preparation course

Source: Ministry of Education and Training: *The Ontario Curriculum, Native Studies*

However, the Native studies courses are not mandatory and do not run unless student numbers warrant it. The only positive changes are found in these instances: a grade 9 general Arts course can be replaced by a grade 9 Native studies course and in grade 11 a general English course can be replaced by the Native studies English course.

Secondary school survey: On paper, the First Nations specific curriculum appears to be addressing the need to create awareness about First Nations peoples among secondary school students. In order to get an overview, a brief telephone survey was conducted with 20 randomly selected secondary schools in Ontario (See list of participating schools in Appendix D).

The survey results were as follows:

11 schools offered NO Native curriculum at all

4 schools offer some Native content courses, 2 offered Native language, 1 offered Native studies, while 1 school offered both Native language and Native studies

5 schools indicated that they sometimes offer Native content courses depending on availability of teacher with Aboriginal cultural knowledge and number of students signing up for courses as they are optional

Because Native studies courses are not mandatory, the majority of secondary schools in Ontario do not offer these courses at all, or only offer them on an inconsistent basis. Those schools, such as the four schools in the survey which report the offering of Native studies, are usually the schools which are close to a First Nations community and have negotiated the offering of Native studies programs in a tuition agreement. However even these schools report the lack of support (fiscal and human) to properly deliver the courses on a meaningful basis.

#### Post secondary education

Colleges and universities in Ontario have made great strides in offering Aboriginal content courses and First Nations specific programs.

Colleges have incorporated First Nations content into their programs and offer First Nations-specific certification in various fields such as the Native social worker, Native child and family worker, Native community worker and related fields. Some colleges, which have implemented such programming, are (but not limited to) Cambrian, Canadore, Confederation, Northern and Georgian (most of which are situated close to large Aboriginal populations).

Universities in Ontario have advanced in the offering of Native Studies curriculum. The two pioneers in the implementation of degree programs in Native Studies are Trent University and the

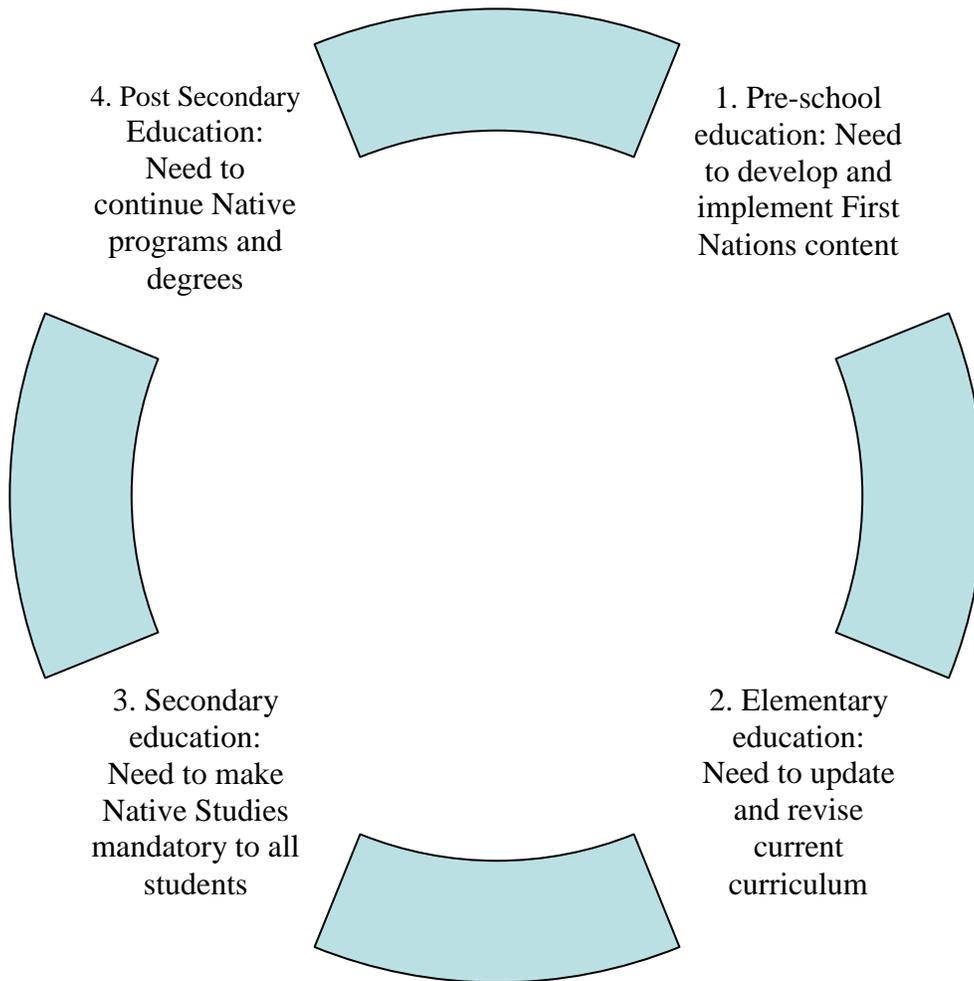
University of Sudbury (federation of Laurentian University). Trent University has progressed into offering undergraduate as well as graduate degrees in Native Studies. Trent also offers diploma programs in Native-related fields. Laurentian University offers a 3-year Bachelor of Arts degree in Native Studies as well as a 4-year Honours Bachelor of Arts degree. In addition, Laurentian offers an Aboriginal Legal Certificate Program. There are also other universities (Toronto, Ottawa, Nipissing, Queen's, Brock, and Lakehead) which offer First Nations-specific degree programs.

A key best practice in the province that shows commitment to equity and First Nations peoples is also found at Laurentian University. The concurrent Bachelor of Education program, which received accreditation in 2003, infuses First Nations worldview throughout the curriculum. All student teachers will receive an education that values the diversity of First Peoples in language arts, social studies, history, geography, mathematics, science/technology and the arts (visual arts, drama, dance). The history of First Nations education is mandatory for all students and the unique approaches of First Nations people to special education is also discussed. All student teachers receive a balanced education in the tri-cultural make-up of the country (First Nations, Anglophones, Francophones).

Laurentian University also supports the development of meaningful partnerships with First Nation communities as part of its unique Teacher Education approach. These partnerships provide the basis for resource sharing between all the stakeholders. There are two types of partnerships that can be summarized into categories of a) associate schools and b) organizations. The associate schools are agreements between the School of Education and the First Nations schools to provide space for the teacher candidates. In return the School of Education will provide pro-bono professional development. An example is an agreement with Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, a second level service organization on Manitoulin Island, which involves the exchange of intellectual and human resources. The terms of these agreements are particular to those organizations (based upon what is needed and what can be offered). One of the critical areas addressed in these partnerships is the need to create more opportunities for First Nations knowledge to be included throughout the curriculum.

In summary the following model provides an overview of the issues and the solutions surrounding First Nations curriculum. These are discussed according to the levels of education in the provincial systems (preschool, elementary, secondary, post-secondary). This is the overview of key statements:

### **Overview of Provincial Education**



### **Examples of Innovative Practices**

The examples selected for this research are provincial, regional and local initiatives. Data on each program and project was gathered through the telephone, fax and the internet. Saskatchewan Education Department was identified as having a comprehensive provincial Native Studies program which has been in existence for the past two decades. The Cree School Board in northern Quebec was selected as an example of an Aboriginal controlled education system which has advanced in creating First Nations curriculum and reference material. Examples of initiatives in Ontario include the Sioux Lookout District curriculum project which is examined comprehensively. Other initiatives noted are the Indigenous Education Coalition in southern Ontario, Kenjgewin Teg curriculum project on Manitoulin Island and the Muskegowuk curriculum project. Ningwakwe Learning Press is also included as an example of quality production and meaningful publication of Aboriginal resource materials.

The main reasons for progress and advancement of these initiatives include:

- Work by volunteers
- Support from province
- Securing appropriate funding
- Partnerships and networking

### **Saskatchewan Experience**

The provincial education department of Saskatchewan has been involved in Aboriginal education for the past three decades. Every five years, an action plan for Aboriginal Education is developed in which First Nations studies is a major component.

The Saskatchewan Education Department has an Aboriginal Education Unit which is the technical support for the advancement of Aboriginal education. The Aboriginal Education Unit is guided by the Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee. The vision of the Saskatchewan Education Department and partner Aboriginal organizations focus on “innovative partnerships working together to successful teaching and learning” (Saskatchewan Education Department).

Objectives which guide the initiatives on First Nations education are:

- Recognition of unique cultural and geographical contexts for education throughout the province (rural and urban contexts, and the North)
- Respect throughout the province for Aboriginal people’s unique languages and histories
- Community partners that work together for the benefit of all students and their families
- Core curriculum, including Aboriginal content and perspectives, actualized in the classroom for the benefit of all students
- Students excelling and choosing from a wide range of possibilities for their futures
- Families that are involved in the education of their children
- Communities that accept responsibility for the education and well-being of all students
- Teachers supported by effective in-service programs and the materials they need to fulfill their responsibilities
- Administrators acting as educational leaders in achieving the goals of Aboriginal education
- School divisions operating on principles of equity, inclusivity, and social justice.

*Source: Aboriginal Education Unit, Saskatchewan Education Department*

The five principles of the Aboriginal Education Unit are:

1. Aboriginal world view is a valid way of knowing and understanding the world.
2. Accountability is essential to progress.
3. Communication throughout the system is key to the achievement of common goals.
4. Quality and authenticity are essential considerations in all Aboriginal education policy and program initiatives.
5. All people must have equitable opportunities to succeed, coupled with respect for individual experiences and knowledge.

*Source: Aboriginal Education Unit, Saskatchewan Education Department*

At the elementary level, First Nations content is incorporated into the core curriculum, and it is reported that ‘the degree to which this happens is not good enough’. There is a website of an Aboriginal resource list for grades K to grade 12, which is to be used by teachers for incorporation of Aboriginal concepts and perspectives. This level of education requires more

resourcing (fiscal & intellectual) and is a priority, albeit there is much more to be done in secondary education.

At the secondary level, three Native Studies courses (grades 10, 11, 12) have been developed and implemented into the provincial schools. The courses are not just guidelines but they are very extensive and detailed and are in a form that is teacher friendly (organized with blackline masters). It is reported that many First Nations schools utilize the courses in varying degrees; adapting the courses to meet their needs or using the courses only as resource materials.

The aim of the Native Studies program is “to develop personal awareness and cultural understanding and to promote the development of positive attitudes in all students towards Indigenous peoples” (Saskatchewan Education Department).

The Native Studies courses cover a range of topics. The grade 10 course focuses on the societal structures of Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples; the grade 11 program covers international indigenous issues; and the grade 12 course includes contemporary Aboriginal issues in Canada. Specific units of study in each level are outlined as follows:

Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Introduction to Aboriginal peoples in Canada	Introduction to indigenous world views	Aboriginal and treaty rights – Aboriginal beliefs and world views
Spiritual life - beliefs	Self determination and self government – sovereignty, introduction to aboriginal/ treaty rights, land claims, models of self government	Governance – political structures, aboriginal self government
Family life – traditional and contemporary		Land Claims and treaty land entitlements – land claims processes and cases
Political life – traditional structures	Development – indigenous perspectives and factors affecting development	Economic development – natural resources
Economic life – traditional, fur trade, current initiatives	Social justice – national and international legislation concerning human rights	Social development – justice, health, education, child welfare
Educational life –traditional history, contemporary		
Social life- traditional and contemporary		

*Source: Aboriginal Education Unit, Saskatchewan Education Department*

Course outlines are provided for teachers and detailed units of study for each topic have been developed. There is also a comprehensive resource list for all grades provided for the schools.

Like Ontario, the secondary level Native Studies courses are NOT mandatory and are offered to students as electives. At the time of this study, it is not known how many schools actually offer Native Studies courses. This segment of the data is incomplete, but, we can assume that the profile for Saskatchewan is similar to the outcomes in Ontario. The outcomes are that ‘very few schools offer these programs’ and that they are determined by local agreements with First Nations and ‘student numbers’. The courses are there on paper but are not live courses in the schools.

### **Cree School Board**

The Cree School Board is a regional education authority which serves nine Aboriginal communities in northern Quebec. The school board was created as a result of the James Bay Agreement which was signed in 1975. The Cree people had included control of education as part of the negotiations with Canada and Quebec. Control of education by the Cree people has enabled the schools to develop and implement First Nations curriculum in various forms and at various levels.

The Cree School Board has worked over the past few years on revising the provincial guidelines for the 'History of Quebec and Canada'. A complete overhaul of the provincial curriculum resulted in a Native studies history course based totally on the Cree perspective. The program is revised to meet the specific needs of Cree students. In addition, the Cree School Board is engaged in an extensive project of creating a textbook to be used as a student reference for this history course. The Native Studies program is outlined as follows:

<b>Modules</b>	<b>General Objectives</b>	<b>Terminal Objectives</b>
The Native Regime	To describe the fundamentals of the Native world	To distinguish between the main theories of human evolution in North America To distinguish between the social, economic, and cultural organization of the Algonkian and Iroquois tribes
The Fur Trade	To describe the role of Natives and the European people in the fur trade	To show the effects of the fur trade on Native peoples To describe the activities of the fur trade To show the impact of the fur trade on the world economy
The Colonial Regime	To understand the fundamentals of colonization during the French and British regimes	To show the impact of colonization during the French and British regimes on Native peoples To compare French and British colonization To describe the impact of the War of 1812 on European/Native relations
In Search of Rights and Justice	To understand how the European/Canadian expansion affected Native people	To explain the effects of the Canadian federation and its expansion on Native lands To describe the development of the Indian Act To explain changes and effects on Canadian, Quebec and Native societies in the twentieth century To explain and describe the emergence of Native issues
The Rise: The Cree Homeland	To understand the main transformations of the Cree society from 1971 onward	To describe the evolution of Cree society since 1971 To analyze the changes brought to the Cree way of life To describe the emergence of the Cree homeland

*Source: Cree School Board*

### The Cree history textbook

The journey to the final product of a Cree history textbook was a long one. After years of development and pilot testing in schools, the ambitious project was completed in 2002. The textbook is an attractive photo-packed 284-page book. The textbook follows the curriculum for the Secondary IV course and includes 16 chapters:

#### Chapters:

1. Theories of the Human Occupation of North America
2. Before European Contact
3. Introduction to the Fur Trade
4. The Fur Trade and its Effects on Native Peoples
5. The Activities of the Fur Trade
6. The Impact of the Fur Trade on the World Economy
7. Introduction to the Colonial Era
8. Impact of Colonization on Native Peoples during the French and British Regimes
9. Characteristics of French and British Colonization
10. The War of 1812 and European/Native Relations
11. From Rebellion to Confederation: the 1830s to 1867
12. Canadian Expansion
13. The Indian Act
14. Changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
15. The Emergence of Native Issues
16. Eeyou Istchee in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Source: Cree School Board*

### **Sioux Lookout District Curriculum Project**

The curriculum project in the Sioux Lookout district is an academic readiness program which has involved a complete rewriting of provincial K-8 guidelines. Curriculum revisions include First Nations content, skills and knowledge and is based on teaching cultural values. The project has been underway over the past two and a half years, and has involved 24 communities, 54 volunteers, and 3 curriculum writers. The project has been received full support and endorsement by the Chiefs of the district.

In 1986 when INAC began transferring the administration of its schools to the First Nations of the Sioux Lookout District, support services such as curriculum development were not provided. Other areas neglected were administrative infrastructures, second level support services, and professional training for school staff and education authorities.

The transfer of schools from the federal government to First Nations administration included the expectations that the schools were “to meet provincial education standards” (Kwayaciiwin Resource Centre). Although schools were following provincial guidelines, it was clear that the guidelines do not meet the needs of the district’s students.

The Kwayaciiwin Resource Centre (KRC) was established to support the schools in meeting the needs of district students. “Kwayaciiwin” means “getting ready” in Anihshiniimowin, and the responsibility of the schools to get the students ready is the focus of the centre’s role. Responsibility includes getting students “ready for further education and ready for life”, as well

as ensuring that language and culture is passed on “with the values, knowledge and skills to live a good life” (KRC).

The District Education Planning Committee (DEPC), which was comprised of education directors of the various district organizations, developed a plan for the ‘Academic Readiness’ project which included a major component on the development of curriculum guidelines and standards.

One of the objectives of the project was to: “graduate students who are bilingual, fluent and literate, in English and Anihshiniimowin, bicultural, able to live in both cultures” (KRC). Other objectives included graduating students to be academically ready for the new Ontario Secondary program, to ensure standards are equivalent to Ontario curriculum guidelines, and to encourage inclusion of community goals, values and traditional knowledge and skills into the program (KRC).

A coordinator and three curriculum writers were hired to work on rewriting the provincial guidelines by incorporating First Nations content to meet the specific needs of district students. Curriculum guidelines which are being worked on are Language, Science, Social Studies, History and Geography, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education and the Arts program.

The curriculum writers worked with teams of local resource people, which comprised of volunteers including elders and experienced teachers. A tremendous amount of work has taken place; however, the project is currently awaiting approval for continued federal funding. At the time of writing this report, there was uncertainty as to whether the project would continue to be funded.

### **Other Initiatives in Ontario**

There are numerous efforts in curriculum development taking place among various First Nations groups in Ontario. There are initiatives which are regionally based to serve a number of communities, many of which are receive no or very minimal funding.

One example is the Indigenous Education Coalition (IEC) which serves the First Nation communities of Aamjiwnaang, Batchewana, Kettle and Stony Point, Chippewas of the Thames, Delaware, Mississaugas of New Credit, Wahta and Walpole Island. Various education services are provided to the communities and Aboriginal curriculum development support is provided to some degree. One of the guiding principles is “to encourage the development of culturally-based curriculum” (IEC). Funding is not available for specific Aboriginal curriculum development, yet some First Nations are attempting to develop Aboriginal-specific content curriculum which will better meet the needs of their students. The IEC has purchased a curriculum model from the USA which they will use as a resource, and are planning to work on adapting the provincial curriculum which will entail ‘working from scratch’. There is limited capacity in the development of Native curriculum and there is definitely a need for funding. There is a demonstrated need for the creation of community based materials and for regional and provincial networking among First Nations.

An excellent example of a best practice in collaborative projects is the curriculum partnership between Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, the Rainbow District School Board and the Ojibway Cultural Foundation. Kenjgewin Teg is an organization that provides educational services to the First Nations schools on Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. The Native Studies curriculum project is titled ‘Shki Mawtch Taw-Win En-Mook (The Path to New Beginnings)’. Its purpose is to develop culturally inclusive curriculum from a First Nations world

view for both Native and non-Native students. Native content curriculum for the primary division (units) are currently being piloted in various schools. These units are supported with an abundance of quality Native specific resources (books, audio, video, internet). This curriculum project is nationally acclaimed for its innovation and commitment to equity. Laurentian University in its Concurrent Teacher Education program touts these units as a best practice for its teacher candidates. Units of study for the junior division are currently underway. Meaningful partnerships are key in the Shki Mawtch Taw-Win En-Mook curriculum project.

In the James Bay area in northeastern Ontario, the Mushkegowuk Council has been involved in the 'Partners in Change' project which involves curriculum development with First Nations specific content. Some work has been done in developing Native-specific units of study at the elementary level and annual curriculum circles are held in the Mushkegowuk territory. These circles are opportunities for educators to come together and share their vision of advancing First Nations curriculum initiatives.

There are very few First Nations controlled production and publication agencies for First Nations content resources. However one notable innovator is the Ningwakwe Learning Press Inc. Ningwakwe provides printing and publishing specifically for Aboriginal books and materials. Books authored by First Nations professionals have been produced by Ningwakwe; these books give validity and credibility to Aboriginal knowledge. Other materials published are novels, local history books, teachers' guides, workbooks, CD Roms and other relevant materials. The learning press receives literacy grants from provincial and federal sources, but is working towards becoming self sufficient. Although the focus of Ningwake Learning Press has been on adult learning materials, it has the capacity to produce any type of learning material at other levels of education. This type of service has been identified as a priority in the First Nations schools survey.

### **Cost Estimates:**

Funding is a major factor in the advancement and success of Aboriginal curriculum development and implementation.

It was very difficult to access information on the financial costs for meaningful curriculum development, other than 'project costs are extremely high'. The following section will provide an estimation of the minimal costs of curriculum development on three levels:

1. Local projects (schools working on developing their own curriculum)
2. Regional projects (groups of schools investing into regional initiatives)
3. Province-wide projects (one central initiative for Native Studies curriculum)

A local, comprehensive, curriculum development project retaining at least one person year curriculum writer plus research/resources would cost at least \$200,000 per year. If 100 schools/programs worked in isolation and were funded at this minimal cost, it would cost \$20,000,000 (twenty million dollars) per year.

For a regional initiative, attaining at least 3 curriculum developers and at least 4 working meetings, it is estimated that at least \$600,000 per year x 10 groups would cost \$6,000,000 (six million dollars) per year.

A provincial initiative in Aboriginal curriculum development would involve at least 10 curriculum writers/researchers and 4 province-wide working meetings which would cost approximately \$2,000,000 (two million dollars) per year.

Curriculum development takes time and cannot be completed in one year, therefore at least five years should be allocated to develop a comprehensive curriculum.

The following comparative chart illustrates the details of each type of project:

Type of Project	Details of costs	Costs per year	Costs for 5 years
Local (individual school) project	\$200,000 per school for one curriculum writer and related costs x 100 schools/programs	\$20 million	\$100 million
Regional (groups of schools) project	\$600,000 per region for three curriculum developers + working group meetings x 10 groups	\$6 million	\$30 million
Province-wide project (for all schools)	\$2,000,000 for ten curriculum researchers/writers + working group meetings, for one province-wide project	\$2 million	\$10 million

Please note that the above figures are only minimal estimates for Aboriginal curriculum development, and does not include costs of textbooks, cultural training for teachers, nor compensation for teachers of First Nations knowledge. Comprehensive research and analysis of costs is required to adequately identify detailed costs.

Investing into First Nations curriculum development and implementation will be an economic win for all parties involved. The government will make an investment that will pay off many times over. The current situation of First Nations people having very low rates of success in the current education systems resulting in high rates of unemployment needs to change. Having no or very little education and no employment contributes to many social problems such alcohol and drug abuse, high suicide rates, lack of self confidence, lack of self esteem and other negative outcomes. Schooling that values the First Nations person in its curriculum and pedagogy is only a beginning and the results need time to tell that story.

Investment into Aboriginal curriculum will result in meaningful education which meets the needs of First Nations people. The Auditor General's Report explains that "The consequences of inadequate or inappropriate education are well known in the context of national and community socio-economic development and sense of personal well-being." And goes on to state that "Thus the requirement to ensure and fund appropriate education needs to be viewed not only as an expenditure but also an investment in present and future human resources" (Auditor General, 2000, p.4-9).

In conclusion, the investment of funding into First Nations specific education is directed in the Auditor General's Report as "the Department will need to further take into account the cultural and special needs of Indian students as well as socio-economic factors that can affect success in education" (Auditor General, 2000, p.4-5).

### **Recommendations**

Based on the data gathered in this research the following key recommendations are presented. It is important to note that each recommendation requires fiscal and human infrastructure to reach these goals. This resourcing should be no less than 'what' is expected for each child in Canada:

1. **Enhanced Funding be provided for existing regional and local initiatives;** these projects are addressing the specific needs of students in their areas and responding to cultural and regional diversity of First Nations peoples.
2. **Funding be secured for a province-wide curriculum project** to produce products which can be utilized in First Nations and provincial schools; this curriculum will include appropriate high quality learning materials and will reflect the cultural diversity of Aboriginal peoples.
3. **Textbooks be produced and published** which reflect the history, culture, beliefs, values and contemporary issues affecting Aboriginal people.
4. **Cultural awareness training designed and delivered by Aboriginal peoples be mandatory all teachers.**
5. **First Nations experts and traditional teachers be retained** to provide guidance and traditional knowledge in the development of First Nations content curriculum.
6. **Partnerships, networking and sharing be promoted in curriculum initiatives** between First Nations educators, and between First Nations and non-Aboriginal education institutes and services.
7. **All students at all levels of education, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, be required to take Native Studies.** Mandatory Native Studies programs should be incorporated into pre-school, elementary, secondary and post secondary programs.

## APPENDIX “A”

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## APPENDIX "B"

### *First Nations Schools: Questionnaire on Native Curriculum*

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Name of First Nation community \_\_\_\_\_

**Does your school have Native studies units/courses?** (not including Native language programs)

\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_no

If no, what are the reasons for not offering Native studies?  
(You may check more than one)

\_\_\_no curriculum

\_\_\_no funding to develop and implement Native studies

\_\_\_lack of teachers with Native studies knowledge/expertise

\_\_\_lack of materials/textbooks/references with Native content

\_\_\_other: explain...

**If yes, what type of Native curriculum does your school offer?**

\_\_\_ Aboriginal history (Canada-First Nations historic relations, treaties, Indian Act, etc)  
Taught in which grade levels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Aboriginal knowledge (world view, values, Grandfather teachings, legends, etc)  
Taught in which grade levels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Aboriginal skills (crafts, traditional cooking, art – painting, sculpture, woodwork, etc)  
Taught in which grade levels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Land based activities (out-door program, camping, trapping, maple syrup sapping, etc)  
Taught in which grade levels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Aboriginal spirituality (smudging, ceremonies, sacred teachings, etc)  
Taught in which grade levels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other: explain program & what grade levels it is offered to

**What are your needs in Native content programming?** (You may check more than one)

\_\_\_ funding specifically for Native studies development and implementation

\_\_\_ curriculum development

\_\_\_ reference material for teachers' use

\_\_\_ textbooks/materials for students' use

\_\_\_ videos/DVDs on Native content

\_\_\_ teachers/resource people with Aboriginal knowledge

\_\_\_ cross cultural training for non-Native teachers/administrators

\_\_\_ cultural training for Native teachers (content, teaching techniques in teaching culture)

\_\_\_ other: explain

**Additional comments:** (please include on a separate sheet)

## APPENDIX “C”

**List of Participating First Nations Schools**

	Name of School	First Nation Community
1	Lakeview School	M’Chigeeng
2	Vezina Secondary School	Attawapiskat
3	Sakatchewan Anishinabe	Grassy Narrows
4	Keewaytinook Internet High School	Northern Chiefs Council
5	Gull Bay School	Gull Bay
6	Abe Scatch Memorial School	Popular Hill First Nation
7	Michikan Lake School	Bearskin Lake First Nation
8	Lac La Croix First Nations Schools	Lac La Croix First Nation
9	Mary Ann Aganash Memorial School	Kingfisher Lake
10	Wasse-abin Junior School	Wikwemikong
11	Northern Eagle High	Ear Falls
12	Bai Bom Beh School	Whitefish Bay, NorthWest Angle # 37 & 33
13	Shawanaga Elementary	Shawanaga First Nation
14	Laura McKenzie Learning Centre	Temagami First Nation
15	Batchewana Learning Centre	Batchewana First Nation
16	I. L. Thomas	Six Nations of the Grand River
17	Constance Lake School	Constance Lake
18	Wasse Abin High School	Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve
19	Kawenni:io/Gaweni:yo School	Six Nations
20	Beedaban Elementary	Sagamok Anishnawbek
21	David Kejick School	Shoal Lake #39
22	Mikinaak Ougaming School	Ojibways of Onigaming
23	Christian Island Elementary School	Beausoleil First Nation
24	St. Joseph’s Anishnabek	Sheshegwaning
25	Pegamigaabo School	Big Grassy River First Nation
26	Shawanosowe	Birch Island
27	Dokis School	Dokis First Nation
28	Delores D. Echum Composite School	Moose Factory
29	Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School	Ahkwesahsne
30	Peetabeck Academy	Fort Albany
31	Nimiki Migizi Secondary School	Ginoogaming & Long Lake #58
32	Ojibway Heritage School	Shoal Lake #40
33	Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School	Mattagami First Nation
34	Cape Croker Elementary	Cape Croker, Chippewas of Nawash
35	Lloyd S. King Elementary	Mississaugas of New Credit
36	Wiji Nimbawiyaang	Chippewas of the Thames
37	Moose Factory Ministik School	Moose Factory
38	First Nations School of Toronto	Toronto
39	Titotay Memorial School	Cat Lake First Nation
40	John C. Yesno Education Centre	Eabametoong
41	Samson Beardy Memorial	Muskrat Dam
42	Kinomaugewgamik Elementary School	Shawanaga First Nation
43	Eagle Nest Elementary School	Long Lac First Nation
44	Pic River Elementary	Pic River First Nation

## APPENDIX “D”

**List of Participating Provincial Secondary Schools**

	Secondary School	Location
1	Dyden High School	Dryden
2	Beaver Brae Secondary School	Kenora
3	Queen Elizabeth District High School	Sioux Lookout
4	Sudbury Secondary School	Sudbury
5	Sir Winston Churchill Collegiate	Thunder Bay
6	North Park Collegiate	Brantford
7	Nipigon Red Rock High School	Red Rock
8	Marathon High School	Marathon
9	Manitoulin Secondary School	M'Chigeeng
10	Northern Lights Secondary School	Moosonee
11	Kernahan Park Secondary School	St. Catherines
12	Cawthra Park Secondary School	Mississauga
13	Hillcrest High School	Thunder Bay
14	Rainy River High School	Rainy River
15	Cochrane High School	Cochrane
16	Fort William Collegiate Institute	Thunder Bay
17	Geraldton Composite School	Geraldton
18	Goderich District Collegiate Institute	Goderich
19	H B Beal Secondary School	London
20	Bloor Collegiate Institute	Toronto