Discussion Circle - Systems

Charting Our Own Path Forward
Education Symposium 2013
Toronto, Ontario
May 7-8, 2013
A First Nations education system embarks on a plan to place ownership back into the hands of the communities in a meaningful manner.

To gain an appreciation for the work that has been undertaken by communities and organizations in Ontario
To explore opportunities to improve current (and planned) systems through coordinated activity
The Approach

Problem Approach
- Whereby Indian Affairs “fixes” problems by introducing new proposal-based programs

Visionary Approach
- Establish goals that are relevant to us
- We design our own system and plan to attain our goals
- We implement our own plan
Ownership and Control

- First Nations are the rights holders – ownership and control stems from here
- First Nations must decide on how control is to be manifested in other organizations within an education system
Thoughts on Options

- Look at other models and build on successes
- Organize by PTO’s instead of regionally
- Organize a consortium of existing services and develop new ones where needed
- Build something totally new – don’t use models currently in use
- First Nations need to aggregate
- Establish a collective First Nation education organization
Much interest was generated from the first focus group session on regarding the establishment of a Collective First Nation Education Organization in Ontario.
Why a Collective Organization?

- We currently don’t have access to third level services
- We need to replace Indian Affairs
- To provide support and resources to assist First Nations in the delivery of a First Nations education system
- To focus on the common elements of programming, curriculum, standards, assessment and evaluation
Structure

- Structure to be regionally representative
- Pillars could be language, culture, spirituality, cultural treasures, heritage treasures on the land
- An education authority representing 133 FN education departments or programs
- Accountability is key
Chart for Discussion Purposes

Collective First Nation Education Organization

First Nation Education Authorities

- Early Learning
- Elementary
- Secondary
- Post Secondary
- Adult Learning
- Human Resources
- Teaching Standards
- Language and Culture
- Learning and Curriculum
- Data Management
- Finance
- Intergovernmental
- Communications

First Nations / Students

- Ensure communication flow
- Advocate for needed change
- Assist work of Collective Organization on Committees and Task Teams

- Jurisdiction stems from here
- Community engagement
- Education Code

Ensure communication flow
Advocate for needed change
Assist work of Collective Organization on Committees and Task Teams

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Turtle as Framework of System
Upper Shell

- 13 markings on the back symbolize the central elements of a collective education organization.
- Smaller outer markings symbolize individual or aggregate education authorities.
Lower Shell

Is divided in 2 halves

- one side represents students attending provincial schools / daycares / postsecondary institutions

- the other side represents students attending First Nation schools / daycares / postsecondary institutions
Anterior and posterior bridges connect bottom of shell to top of shell
  ◦ this represents connecting FN schools and provincial schools to the top of the shell (authorities and collective education organization)
Possible Responsibilities

Main Categories – see handout for a complete list
- Capital Planning
- Data Management
- Finance
- Intergovernmental and Sectoral Coordination
- Communications
- Human Resources
- Teaching Standards and Development
- Language and Culture
- Learning and Curriculum
Anticipated Challenges and Next Steps

OVERALL SYSTEMS AND COLLECTIVE ORGANIZATION
Anticipated Challenges

• How can we coordinate a shared effort?
• Time and resources (human and fiscal)
• Need to set aside political affiliations and differences.
• Fear of losing resources
Next Steps

- Visioning
  - For coordinating systems
  - For a collective education organization
- Determine **lines of authority** for the systems, collective organization, education authorities, Chiefs and Council, etc.
- Establish a representative **task force** – ensure grassroots input
Ideas from Keynotes and Presentations from Day 1