



Aboriginal Teacher Education
Issues for First Nations Communities

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Overview of the Issues

It is a time of great change in First Nations education in Ontario. The Rainy Lake Chiefs of Grand Council Treaty #3, the Union of Ontario Indians, and Nishnawbe-Aski Nation are negotiating the mandate and structure of First Nations controlled education systems under the federal Inherent Rights policy. The federal government has identified First Nations education as a priority issue and established a roundtable process to facilitate policy and program change. The Auditor General of Canada has issued a second report (2002 and November, 2004) documenting the absolute failure of the approach by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to the administration of First Nations education. INAC and the Assembly of First Nations have established joint working committees to develop new approaches to the band operated funding formula which funds First Nations schools, and to address issues regarding First Nations post-secondary education. The Chiefs of Ontario have established a comprehensive project to identify First Nations educational needs through the development of the Manifesto. The amount of activity is encouraging and cannot help but lead to an evolution in First Nations education.

A foundational element of a high quality First Nations education system is the presence of teachers and educators who understand First Nations history, culture, intellectual traditions, and language. They must also comprehend First Nations relationships with the land and creation. Teachers in a First Nations education system will be required to deliver a curriculum that honours the gifts of each First Nations student. They will facilitate in each student the knowledge, the wisdom and the longing for learning, thereby taking them on the 'road to knowledge - which is eternal'. It is understood that the teaching staff of First Nations schools may include both First Nations and non-First Nations teachers. A relevant First Nations education system has the mandate and personnel to provide the curriculum, resources and professional development opportunities for all teachers of First Nations students. This system will maintain and support current teachers and educate and recruit new teachers that are committed to Indigenous communities.

Control and certification of the education of teachers in First Nations schools is essential for the success of a First Nations education system. Recognizing the work of First Nations institutions in teacher education (professional development) and supporting First Nations schools is the first step in this process. Developing standards for First Nations education/teaching and developing a certificate for teachers of First Nations' students is an essential second step. The development of an Aboriginal/First Nations teacher education programme within a First Nations controlled post-secondary institution is the third step. This will ensure that teachers are prepared to honour the standards of First Nations education. It is also critical that all teacher education programmes prepare their graduates to teach First Nations students and have a background in First Nations culture, history, and intellectual traditions. A Ministry of Education requirement for all faculties of education to develop and deliver these courses is needed to ensure that all teachers are prepared to respect First Nations peoples and First Nations students in their classrooms.

First Nations, federal and provincial governments must acknowledge that the primary authority for education lies with the members of each First Nation. This is defined as a) the responsibility to develop and deliver its own education programme; b) the training and recruiting of its own teachers; and, c) the development of the necessary services needed to support this First Nations education system. Federal and provincial governments will need to change policy and legislation to support these activities. First Nations governments must work together to develop systems which support every First Nation student wherever they attend school. Federal and provincial policies must be amended to enable these levels of government to work with the First Nations education systems.

While this system is being developed, First Nations communities will need to provide on-going support for their current teachers. They will need to assist their teachers in the implementation of a new First Nations curriculum. The development of a First Nations curriculum will require First Nations educators to work with classroom teachers, Native language teachers, classroom support workers, community members and administrators. Together they will need to establish First Nations standards for both students and teachers in First Nations schools. The development of First Nations standards of practice will be necessary to ensure the success of First Nations' students.

Non-Aboriginal teachers play an important role in teaching First Nations students both in provincial schools and in First Nations schools. The knowledge they bring to their teaching assignments is varied and it is imperative that pre-service programmes are responsive to this reality. Schools of education must develop courses to ensure pre-service candidates have adequate knowledge of Aboriginal peoples. All students will be better served when teachers are more fully prepared to teach about First Nations history, culture and intellectual traditions.

The revitalization and maintenance of First Nations languages is essential for the survival and distinctiveness of First Nations peoples. In order to ensure that First Nations children are competent in their own languages, programmes both in school and at the community level need to be developed and delivered. Current Native language teacher certification programmes need to be expanded and new programmes developed in First Nations post-secondary institutes and language development centres. This will ensure that Native language teachers are taught the skills necessary for their teaching role in a First Nations curriculum.

This concept paper focuses on these three areas: 1. recruitment and graduation of Aboriginal teachers; 2. cultural training for all teachers and 3. Native language teacher certification. This paper will address the following questions: What is the vision for the future for First Nations education? What currently exists in the First Nations education system? What do First Nations need to realize their vision for a successful education system? What are the costs of each item needed to realize the vision for a successful First Nations education system? What are the roles and obligations of the federal, provincial and First Nations governments in achieving the vision of a successful First Nations education system?

Information for this report has been gathered from a variety of sources: research reports, government documents, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, documents from provincial political organizations, interviews and personal knowledge.

Part One - Recruitment and Graduation of Aboriginal Teachers: What is the vision for the future for First Nations Education?

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) articulates the view of elders and communities on education. First Nations peoples want their children to:

- a) know their own language and traditions,
- b) continue their education in a post-secondary institution of their choice,
- c) be contributing members of their community,
- d) teach their children the language and traditions of their First Nations heritage,
- e) operate in both cultures, and in the global economy, but be rooted in their traditions and culture.

(Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, 1996)

These elements continue to be the basis from which a First Nations education system will be developed. The Rainy Lake Chiefs of Grand Council Treaty #3, the Union of Ontario Indians, and Nishnawbe-Aski Nation are negotiating the mandate and structure of First Nations controlled education systems under the federal Inherent Rights policy. These negotiations have been initiated to ensure that the definition of 'Indian Control of Indian Education' is more than the transfer of administrative functions to local communities. It is intended that the negotiations will have the result that the First Nations parties will have full authority to plan and implement First Nations controlled education systems funded by the Government of Canada (as required by their treaty obligations). The vision for First Nations education systems includes local schools, second level service agencies to support these schools, agencies to work with provincial school boards where First Nations students attend, and third level or Nation/Treaty level services to co-ordinate local activities and establish First Nations education laws, policies and standards for matters such as teacher certification, curriculum, language education and other essential elements of First Nations education.

A foundational element of implementing a high quality, culturally responsive First Nations education system requires the training and recruitment of teachers who are able to teach a First Nations curriculum. Within a First Nations education system teachers will be required to possess a First Nations teachers certificate issued by First Nations education governing bodies. They will meet the requirements and standards developed by First Nations education governance authorities.

It is the goal of a First Nations education system to employ teachers who are from First Nations communities who know and understand First Nations languages and cultures. These teachers will know the students in the schools and will provide a

consistent long-term education programme. These elements currently exist in some First Nations schools, but the overall goal is ensure that all First Nations schools have this lived vision. The teaching staff is to be consistent and dedicated to the educational goals of the First Nations education system.

Retaining teachers who are currently working in First Nations schools and providing in-service (additional skills and knowledge to deliver a First Nations curriculum) is also required. Providing the salary base, professional support, housing arrangements and classroom environments that support teachers will be necessary for student success. First Nations teachers must be paid to a rate comparable or exceeding that which exists in the provincial education system. First Nations funding for education must be confirmed on a multi-year basis so that teachers can have multi-year contracts. Current conditions are not consistent across First Nations schools and teacher turnover is a major issue in many communities. In order to provide a solid educational foundation for First Nations students, a consistent and committed teaching staff is required.

Current teacher qualifications for an Ontario Teachers Certificate from the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) requires a Diploma in Education or a Bachelor of Education degree. Both are issued upon successful completion of a pre-service programme at a designated Faculty of Education. A Diploma in Education is issued to graduates who have successfully completed the pre-service programme but do not possess an undergraduate degree. A Bachelor of Education degree is issued to graduates of a pre-service programme who do possess an undergraduate degree.

INAC funding policies have required First Nations communities to adopt hiring standards similar to provincial school boards without ensuring teacher education programs and certification processes are responsive to the needs of First Nations peoples. Teachers are required to be licensed, or eligible to be licensed, by the Ontario College of Teachers. They must also possess an Ontario Teachers Certificate and have both an undergraduate degree and a Bachelor of Education degree. An Ontario Teachers Certificate is also available for graduates from a faculty of education program who do not have an undergraduate degree. These graduates receive a Diploma in Education and an Ontario Teachers Certificate. However, First Nations education authorities have made it a priority to hire teachers with both an undergraduate degree and a Bachelor of Education (Anderson 2001, 2002).

Most graduates from Aboriginal Teacher Education programmes offered in the six faculties of education in Ontario receive a Diploma in Education and an Ontario Teachers certificate. They are licensed to teach in Ontario, but their credentials are not honoured in the same way as Bachelor degree students. This creates a situation where graduates from Aboriginal Teacher education programmes require additional courses to be fully certified and gain employment in their own First Nations schools. Changes are required to First Nations hiring policies to include Aboriginal Teacher education programme graduates, and to Aboriginal Teacher education programmes to deliver courses that ensure graduates receive their undergraduate degrees and full certification from the Ontario College of Teachers.

The issue of teacher recruitment is linked with the issue of teacher retention in First Nations schools. Teacher retention varies in each community and unfortunately statistics are not available to provide further details. However it is reported that teacher turnover rates range from 0% in some southern First Nations communities to as much as 40% in some northern communities. Issues related to teacher retention are: competitive pay scales, benefits packages, retirement packages, teachers' home community, professional development opportunities and acceptance in the First Nation.

The teaching population in First Nations schools are made up of teachers both from the community and from outside the community. Providing equitable salaries and benefits is essential for the recruitment and retention of teachers. The funding formula for teachers salaries is primarily based on an administrative function, not on salaries determined through negotiations between federations and local school boards. There is a major discrepancy in some areas like Moose Factory and Moose Island where there are as many as 4 different salary grids for teachers. This includes the band-operated school salary scale, the Catholic school teachers salary scale, the public elementary teachers salary scale and the public high school teachers salary scale. In this case, funding for teachers' salaries in the band-operated school is way below all other salary grids. This forces the local Education Authority to supplement teachers' salaries by removing dollars from other much needed programmes.

Funding for teachers benefits (pension plans, health care, dental care, professional development opportunities) is another priority in recruiting and retaining teachers in First Nations schools. Band-operated school funding provides minimal fiscal resources for these benefits, thus creating a gap and disparity with the provincial teachers. These discrepancies are the result of an outdated INAC funding policy and formula that does not deal with the realities of First Nations schools. A new funding formula will be required for the First Nations education system to address the inequities which exist.

It is a goal of First Nations to provide pre-service education for teachers in First Nations schools. It is believed that the standards established by First Nations would be applicable in both the provincial system and the First Nation education system. Negotiations with the Ontario College of Teachers for the recognition of a First Nations teachers certificate will ensure that graduates from these programmes will be licensed to teach in any school in Ontario, both on and off First Nations communities.

The underlying principle of a responsive, high quality First Nations education is based on teaching the First Nations languages of the community. New methodologies will have to be considered to achieve this. Examples include: Immersion programmes, as being practiced in Sagamok First Nation, in the Navajo Nation, and in Northwest Ontario where the First Nations language is the language of instruction in elementary grades. Each of these models must be explored and expanded to all communities.

Curriculum and language resource materials to support these activities need to be catalogued and developed. Many different programme models will be developed and

delivered according to local language speakers being available for the classroom (Fishman 1990, Harrison 1998, Lipka 2002). In communities where teachers will be fluent in the language, they will be able to teach in the language (Navajo Nation, Alaska First Nations, James Bay Cree). In communities where teachers are not fluent in the First Nations language, activities can be planned and implemented to involve Native language speakers in their classrooms. Teachers will also learn to share the teaching responsibilities in the classroom with the Native language teachers to ensure a more grounded approach to language and culture in the classroom. Varied implementation models will be developed to meet individual First Nations needs. This means more control of Aboriginal teacher education programmes or the creation of new First Nations controlled education programmes is necessary.

What currently exists in the First Nations education system?

In 2001 there were 22 355 First Nations students attending school, including kindergarten, elementary and secondary programmes. In Ontario there are 6 federal schools, 96 band-operated schools and First Nations students attend 349 provincial schools (All figures from INAC Regional Program Data Base 2001). 1997 Canadian Census Data indicates that First Nations/Aboriginal educators make up only 4% of the professional teaching population. A recent survey by St. Denis, Bouvier and Battiste (1998) reveals that (of the Aboriginal teachers they surveyed), 64% are female and 33% are male. This survey found that most female Aboriginal teachers teach in the elementary grades (kindergarten to grades 6) while most male teachers teach in the secondary school panel (Cited in Saskatchewan Education, 2002). These figures provide reflection for the Ontario environment, however a more in-depth study is required to confirm these statistical impacts. Of note, the Ontario College of Teachers is currently gathering data on teachers (race, gender, age, qualifications, retention) that can be drawn upon in the future for consideration.

There continues to be a demand for First Nations/Aboriginal teachers in First Nations schools. Two reports for the Queen's University Aboriginal Teacher Education Programme focus on the continued growth of the programme in both the James Bay and the Manitoulin/North Shore area. Two issues were identified that support the need for more First Nations/Aboriginal teachers: the low retention rate in First Nations schools, and negotiating for First Nations/Aboriginal teachers in provincial schools. In both these cases, there is a continuing demand for qualified First Nations/Aboriginal teachers (Anderson 2001 and 2002).

In Ontario, teachers graduate from one of the nine Faculties of Education within universities across the province. Graduates from these programmes receive their Ontario Teaching Certificate from the Ontario College of Teachers. The content and course offerings in pre-service programmes are determined by the institutions and are based on the provincial curriculum. There are five Aboriginal Teacher Education programmes currently being offered both on-campus and in community based programmes (Lakehead, Brock, Ottawa, Queen's and Nipissing). These programmes are designed to graduate elementary school teachers. York University is currently

preparing to offer an Aboriginal Teacher Education programme for Aboriginal high school teachers. The Aboriginal Teacher Education programmes are monitored by an Aboriginal Education Council in each of these five institutions. However, as these programmes are based on provincial curriculum, their ability to add Aboriginal content to the regular programme of study is limited.

Several First Nations post-secondary institutes are partners in the delivery of Aboriginal teacher education programmes, however universities retain control for the admission requirements, graduation requirements and issuing of degrees. The development of an Aboriginal Teacher Education programme within a First Nations Institute is necessary to ensure that First Nations can establish curriculum and programme standards which reflect First Nations cultures, community needs and respect First Nations intellectual property. This could be modelled after the Laurentian University concurrent education model that infuses First Nation history, culture and traditions throughout its courses. Examples such as this serve to facilitate the vision of a relevant teacher education that truly responds to the cultural, social, spiritual and political imperatives of First Nations peoples.

In a recent study, the Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies released a report entitled *Learning About Walking in Beauty: Including Aboriginal perspectives in Canadian Classrooms* (CAAS, 2002). Findings from this report indicate that Canadian students have not received a basic education about Aboriginal/First Nations peoples. Furthermore they do not know or have relationships with First Nations peoples or communities. Although there are several expectations to teach about Aboriginal peoples, teachers are reluctant or unable to teach this part of the curriculum.

One major recommendation from this report is to ensure that all teachers are engaged in professional development programmes to learn about First Nations/Aboriginal people. This also requires an expansion of the expectations in the curriculum to include more information and knowledge about First Nations/Aboriginal people (CAAS, 2002). First Nations have repeatedly pressed the government of Ontario to address these concerns for years, however there has been limited movement on this front.

Pre-service candidates currently are not required to have a prerequisite course in Aboriginal/Native Studies for entry into the majority of pre-service programmes. Lakehead University offers a mandatory Native Studies course in its pre-service programme. The University of Fairbanks in Alaska has made it mandatory for all teachers to have knowledge of First Nations peoples in order to secure employment in that state. These practices must be expanded to ensure that all schools have similar requirements for employment.

For existing teachers in provincial schools, the Ministry of Education requires that all teachers engage in a process of continuous development. As a result of this a number of 'service providers' offer additional qualifications courses and professional development activities. Some First Nations post-secondary institutes are engaged in providing programmes directed at all teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills.

An expanded programme of courses from First Nations institutes is needed. In addition, First Nations and the Ontario College of Teachers must recognize these programmes as valid professional development opportunities.

Although the learning path of each teacher will vary, there are activities offered to further the knowledge and teaching practices of teachers (Native content specific). It is noted that the provincial curriculum only specifies teaching about First Nations people in the grades 3 and 6 Social Studies programmes. At the secondary level, eighteen different Native Studies courses are available but very few are being delivered. In fact, the only school boards which are delivering Native Studies courses are those which have tuition agreements with First Nations. With an increased knowledge base about First Nations peoples, these courses will provide an experiential learning opportunity for existing teachers and subsequently improve the delivery of education to both First Nations and non-First Nation students.

First Nations specific professional development for existing teachers currently comes from a variety of sources. The following is a brief list of some of these activities:

- Aboriginal Institutions working in association with local school boards to develop and deliver professional development activities:
 - Seven Generations Education Institute and North – West Ontario School Boards,
 - Rainbow District School Board and Kenjgewin Teg,
 - Simcoe County school board and Ogimaawaj Tribal Council.
- The Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario has developed a teacher workshop called ‘The Learning Circle’ with resources for teachers to include aboriginal People across the curriculum,
- Second-level First Nations organizations under the auspices of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation are developing and delivering on-going professional development activities for teachers and administrators in the Treaty Nine area,
- Seven Generations Education Institute and Grand River Education Institute are delivering a Principal’s Certification programmes for principals in First Nations Schools,
- The Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies is working to establish Teaching Circles for Native and non-Native teachers to discuss and support individual efforts in the classroom. This is modelled after the Teaching Circles established in Manitoba.

What do First Nations need to realize their Vision for successful First Nations Education Systems?

The challenges in teacher education from a First Nations perspective can be reduced to two key issues. First, educating First Nations teachers to teach in both First Nations and provincial schools. Second, training non-native teachers to teach in First Nations

communities and to teach about First Nations people in provincial schools, at the post-graduate and graduate level.

The development and adoption of First Nations standards for teachers and the establishment of teacher certification or licenses for teachers in First Nations communities is a necessary direction which must be pursued. Teacher certification standards must be established by First Nations.

Establishing and controlling an Aboriginal/First Nations teacher education programme that includes culture, language, history and intellectual traditions in the curriculum is a fundamental need for effective and high quality First Nations education. Training for teacher candidates in pedagogy (methodologies and standards as established by First Nations education bodies) must reflect the high standards of First Nations professionalism and be designed to reflect the needs of First Nations students. Seven Generations Education Institute, Kenjigewin Teg and other Aboriginal institutes are engaged in these activities and will continue to develop standards and programmes in the future. The need to maximize human and financial resources will necessitate the establishment of a First Nations controlled and recognized teacher education program which is offered through one or more First Nations post-secondary institutions, reflecting the cultural and regional diversity of First Nations peoples.

In terms of training for non-Aboriginal teachers, several issues regarding the preparation of teachers who teach about Aboriginal people must be addressed. Harper (2000) and the Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies (CRRF 2002) suggests that all teacher candidates in Faculties of Education should be taught:

- ❖ Inclusion of more Native content across all education courses,
- ❖ Greater exposure to Native literature, authors and issues,
- ❖ Classroom management strategies to deal with high absenteeism, poor study skills, poor behaviour, high levels of violence, teaching to English second language speakers,
- ❖ Cross-cultural, multicultural teaching strategies,
- ❖ practicum in First Nation schools and multi-graded classroom environments
- ❖ Focus on special education, and
- ❖ Courses in inquiry or problem-solving in the work place where surprises, challenges, are the norm.

Harper (2000) also recognized that First Nations communities must bear greater responsibility in communicating their pedagogical goals and purposes to potential teachers at the interview process. Many times new teachers are unprepared for the northern (First Nations) environments. Communities must provide direction and assist teachers in understanding community educational goals. Teachers from outside a First Nations community often do not know the culture and history of the community where they will be working. Yet teachers are expected to be adequately prepared to teach First Nations students in a culturally sensitive manner. Current band-operated school funding does not provide for the expenses incurred in designing and implementing an orientation process for teachers. Funding must be made available to communities to

welcome all teachers into the First Nation and provide cultural orientation for all staff. This would establish an inviting relationship between the teaching staff and the community that will assist in the retention process.

The Ministry of Education has designed a programme of Additional Qualifications (AQ) courses for teachers. These courses are designed to improve the quality of teaching and determine their salary designation with QECO (Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario). AQ courses are generally delivered in three parts (part three leading to a Specialist Certificate in that area). The Ontario College of Teachers monitors the delivery of these courses and designates service providers for these courses. AQ courses are offered by post-secondary institutions within the faculties of education. There exists only 1 course designated for teachers who wish to learn more about First Nations people; called *Teachers of Native Students* and this course is an introductory course only with no specialist designation. Faculties of education must make this course available more consistently for teachers who work with First Nations students and those who work in First Nations communities. As well, the Ontario College of Teachers must further develop this course under the direction of First Nations educators to ensure that a specialist designation is available.

At present the Ontario College of Teachers does not recognize First Nations education as a separate and distinct element of the teaching profession. There is a need to develop a relationship between First Nations and the Ontario College of Teachers. This relationship will honour the work that must begin at faculties of education to raise the commitment to First Nations peoples. In addition, teachers must be able to move easily between a First Nations education system and the provincial system. Developing avenues and honouring the standards of First Nations education and building strong links for teachers will be necessary for recruiting and retaining teachers in First Nations communities.

The Ontario Teachers Federation and its member organizations are also involved in professional development activities and offer a wide range of courses for teachers. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario consistently offers a Summer Institute on First Nations Education for elementary teachers. This course will again be offered to members of the E.T.F.O. in the summer of 2004.

What are the costs of each item needed to realize the vision for a successful First Nations Education system?

New funding formulas will be required to designate the true cost of teacher needs in First Nations education systems. Costing elements will need to include:

- competitive salaries for all teaching staff,
- competitive benefits packages for all staff,
- competitive retirement programme and benefits for all staff,
- specific funds for professional development for all school staff,
- consistent funding for Tribal Councils and other designated First Nations agencies for the recruitment of teachers for First Nations schools,

- base funding for First Nations post-secondary institutions to develop and expand teacher education programmes and professional development programmes.

First Nations Institutes will require long-term funding to develop and deliver Aboriginal teacher education programmes. Costing elements are required to:

- develop the curriculum,
- develop the resources needed to deliver the programme,
- establish a faculty within an existing First Nations post-secondary institute,
- establish on-going funding for the continuation of this programme,
- lobbying with the provincial Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ontario College of Teachers for recognition of this programme.

Current budgets for one teacher education program in one First Nation post-secondary institute (offered in partnership with a provincial university for the purposes of offering accredited programming) indicate that expenses for one year of operation exceed \$160,000. Funding is received from both provincial and federal sources on a proposal-driven basis to operate this programme locally. The First Nations institute does not receive the tuition fees that are paid to the host institution, nor the Basic Income Unit funding received by the university from the provincial government. As First Nations institutions accept responsibility for the delivery of these programmes, funds must be secured and guaranteed to enable these institutions to operate on a multi-year basis.

Current band-operated school funding includes a limited amount of professional development monies for teachers and staff which may or may not be available after all other costs are covered. Professional development has proven to be essential in ensuring the quality of education in First Nations communities. A new education funding formula for First Nations education systems must include funds for each community to assist their teaching staff in their continuous learning process. This includes providing costs for courses, materials, travel and accommodations.

Ontario's five teacher federations engage in professional development for their members. Ninety percent of the costs for these activities derives from federation funds and user fees, and until recently only a minor percentage came from the provincial government. Costs for activities vary according to the member federation, however a general approach can be based on the following model.

For a two-day course, there would need to be funding for a workshop presenter, course design, rental of facilities and photocopying amounting to \$ 6,000. There would also need to be funding to support the travel, accommodation and meals of twenty participants. This works out to roughly \$1,000 per participant and a total amount of \$ 26,000 per two day course.

Costs for professional development can be substantial however, it is an investment which is necessary to address the quality needs of teachers of First Nations students.

What are the roles and obligations of the Federal, provincial and First Nation's governments in achieving the vision of a successful First Nations Education system?

First Nations governments must accept the responsibility for mandating First Nations institutions to deliver First Nations teacher education programmes. Negotiations with the provincial Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ontario College of Teachers to recognize these programmes and requirements for an Ontario Teaching Certificate and registration into the Ontario College of Teachers must also be undertaken. Provincial policies and requirements for teachers must recognize the authority of First Nations communities in determining their own education systems and teacher requirements. Processes to recognize teachers and graduates from First Nations institutions must be implemented.

Changes to all pre-service programmes to include mandatory courses about Aboriginal/First Nations peoples and the recognition of First Nations teaching methodologies must begin immediately and be revisited on a regular basis by the provincial government. These changes will ensure that all new teachers are prepared to teach First Nations students attending provincial and those teaching in First Nations schools.

Provincial policy and legislation must be amended to acknowledge First Nations institutions and the programmes. The authority for delivering elementary, secondary and post-secondary education is an essential element of First Nations self-government. First Nations knowledge, philosophy, education and tradition must be taught from a First Nations perspective. Provinces will be required to recognize the integrity of First Nations institutions and their role as valid education service delivery organizations.

The federal government is the primary funding agent for First Nations education, by virtue of treaties and federal constitutional authority. The Federal government must amend its Band Operated Funding Formula for First Nations schools to consider systems of First Nations education, not just the local delivery of a provincial education program. These systems must include funding for the design, development and delivery of First Nations teacher education programs; teachers salaries and benefits which are comparable to provincial levels; and professional development programs which can be delivered to First Nations teachers or non-Aboriginal teachers. The federal government must also exercise its fiduciary responsibility to ensure that provincial standards for teacher certification reflect the need to have a basic understand of First Nations histories, cultures and learning needs.

Part Two - Native Language Teacher Education: The Vision

First Nations have articulated a vision to graduate students who are fluent in their own First Nations language as well as fluent in a second language (English or French). This

vision demands a different teaching model for Native language programmes. Currently, First Nations languages are taught as an additional course, offered in designated time frames; 20 minutes a day for primary students, 40 minutes a day for junior and intermediate students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999). In provincial high schools, Native languages are designated courses recognized by the Ministry of Education and can be taught either as a second language or as a replacement for French as a second language. No courses are offered with First Nations languages as the language of instruction. These time allocations are designated by provincial ministry of education guidelines and have been adopted into most First Nations schools. In order to fulfil the vision of fluency in First Nations languages, this model must be changed. First Nations curriculum, based on language education either as language of instruction or as a second-language programme, must be developed for a First Nations education system.

In order to deliver this new First Nations curriculum, Native language instructors and Native language teachers must be better prepared to implement either an immersion programme or a significant second-language programme (within both First Nations schools and in provincial schools where First Nations students attend). First Nations communities and local school boards must accept responsibility for implementing this new initiative. They must support their teachers in designing and delivering a curriculum that enables First Nations students to engage and learn their own language.

Teaching First Nations languages to First Nations students requires the involvement of language speakers as well as teachers. It will be a priority to include language carriers¹ into the teaching process and allow them to work with all students in learning their language. A new First Nations definition of teaching to include First Nations' language carriers in delivering curriculum content is needed. This is the direction for the First Nations Education System.

Native Language Teacher training is currently offered at Lakehead University and at Brock University. The programme at Lakehead University is delivered in three parts over three summers and is based on provincial Ministry of Education guidelines. Native Language Teachers must be trained in the new First Nations curriculum and the programme must be made available in other areas across Ontario. At Brock University, the programme is primarily designed to meet the need for Hotinonhsonni (Iroquoian) language teachers, especially in the Cayuga and Mohawk immersion programs and other second language programs. Brock also offers a program leading to a certificate in Native as a Second Language (NSL).

It is time for Native Language Teacher programmes to come under the auspices of First Nations controlled post-secondary institutions. The connections between First Nations institutions and First Nations schools are a key aspect of a lifelong learning system in First Nations communities. The qualitative evolution which is required for

¹ The term "Language Carriers" refers to those who are fluent speakers in their own First Nations' Language. Language Carriers includes Elders and Youth who use their language on a regular basis and who are able to share their knowledge and encourage others in learning their language.

Native Language Teacher programmes and Native language programs in schools can only occur through First Nations controlled processes and systems.

In order to support advanced First Nations languages programmes, First Nations Language Institutes must be established. First Nations Language Institutes will write curriculum documents, create resource materials and provide professional development for language carriers, teachers and support staff. These language institutes will be a centre for language research and will support First Nations communities and provincial schools in the delivery of First Nations language programmes. Implementation models will also require the support of these language institutes. The community decision to engage in immersion programmes or a modified second-language programme must be made. Once this is done the materials and resources will be made available to the schools in implementing these programmes. First Nations Language Institutes will provide this support.

Existing Situation – Realizing the Vision

The First Nations languages that are taught in schools as subjects across the province have not been successful in developing fluent speakers.

The designated time frames outlined by the Ministry of Education and adopted by First Nations schools do not allow First Nations students meaningful language acquisition. A programme overview of Native Language instruction has not been carried out and may be necessary to document the success and struggles of First Nations language teachers. However, the true assessment of these programmes is the ability of First Nations students to speak to their Elders and to each other in their own language.

Models for Native language instruction from other aboriginal cultures demonstrate the effectiveness of immersion programmes. Hingangaroa Smith (2000) presents an immersion model that has been successful in New Zealand after the Maori Language was nearly lost. Effective integration of culture and language with the skills of reading and writing are included to ensure that Maori children are fluent speakers. Language teachers also teach from a traditional perspective, which includes Maori songs and teachings. These models can be used as a foundation for a First Nations education curriculum and the immersion programmes that are necessary to ensure its success.

Support for First Nations language teachers varies greatly across the province. It has been reported that in some schools the First Nation language teacher is seen as a full teaching member of the school staff and provided with curriculum support and resources. In other schools, the First Nations language teacher is seen as a ‘para-professional’ without qualifications or status as a teacher. In these cases the teacher does not a) have access to classroom supplies b) do not have their own workspace, or c) a permanent classroom. In some cases this contravenes inclusions to tuition agreements between local school boards and First Nations communities that provide the funding for First Nations language teachers (personal communications between the Authors and Native Language Teachers as well as ETFO (2003)).

First Nations language programs need to be developed to produce a higher level of fluency that will meet the challenges of language revitalization initiatives. This will facilitate the deeper understanding of the language and worldview. Also, with some understanding of language elements, the writing system will result in improved use and communication for students. Students must be able to converse in the language.

Although Native Language Teacher Programmes graduate language instructors there is still a shortage province wide. Some problems that students have faced with the programmes are: a) the dialectical barriers with the programme, b) they do not cater to all language families in the province, c) proficiency in the language is not required, d) the institution location and e) they gain limited teacher certification from the Ontario College of Teachers. According to programme descriptions, Native Language Teacher Programmes do not provide pedagogical resources to diversify teaching methods (especially with world view and cultural knowledge). The advantage to locating Native Language Teacher Programmes in First Nations controlled post-secondary institutions is to ensure a connection to First Nations language families, human resources, First Nations education infrastructure, and to ensure First Nations control over the setting of priorities.

Costs

There are numerous examples of First Nation organizations and grassroots movements that have developed immersion schools and language programmes. These examples reflect a state where fluency is developed successfully, but they are in dire need of resources to support their programmes. They began their immersion journey with parental/community re-education initiatives. These reinforce the urgent need to preserve and revitalize our languages and cultures that would “enable them to become more politically aware of deeper meanings associated with schooling and education and subsequently to take action in changing these circumstances” (Hingangoraoa Smith, 2000). In turn, “the establishment of Maori immersion program in state funded schools constituted one major aspect of the movement” (Harrison, 1998) in the early 80’s. Classrooms were added year by year with graduating classes who then continued on to their own post secondary immersion programs. Their success is shown in their 1997 Effectiveness Review Report that found “high quality educational service to students whanau and iwi (tribe)” (Harrison, 1998).

This research indicates that a substantive inclusion of new funding is needed to develop and to continue First Nations language programmes. The necessary support is required to support expanded programmes within First Nations post-secondary institutions and to establish Language Institutes as supporting infrastructure for the programmes and for local language programmes. The federal band-operated funding formula currently a) does not have a definition for Native Language programming, b) does not include the immersion programmes which exist in First Nations communities and, c) does not currently consider the supportive infrastructure required for high quality language programming including Native language teacher education. A renewed First Nations education funding formula must be developed to

include the real costs of a First Nations education system including the costs of Native language teacher education, and First Nations language curriculum development and production.

Roles and Obligations of Provincial, Federal and First Nations Governments

Provincial school boards must honour their commitment to First Nations language instruction by providing the support and resources necessary for the success of the programme. First Nations language teachers must be recognized as members of the teaching staff, providing curriculum/classroom support materials and ensuring the designated time is essential. First Nations are also concerned that students are not given the priority to attend First Nations language programmes due in part to Native language classes being held at the same time as other 'core' subjects like English and mathematics. Provincial schools must ensure that all First Nations students have unimpeded access to First Nations language classes.

First Nations governments must ensure that Native language services that are provided for in local tuition agreements are being fulfilled. This also requires First Nations communities to monitor and assess the success of provincial school programmes. They must work with provincial schools to ensure that First Nations language programmes are receiving the resources necessary for success. In addition, First Nations communities must also ensure that language carriers are available to provincial schools. These measures will support First Nations language teachers and their programmes. Provincial schools will not initiate additions or inclusions to these programmes; this initiative must come from First Nations communities.

The Federal government must acknowledge its responsibility for the loss of First Nations languages through its historical past of cultural genocide (residential schools and assimilation initiatives). It is imperative that funding be available to ensure that all First Nations students are taught their own language and receive instruction that meets the needs of a First Nations curriculum. At present cultural education centres have limited budgets for language support materials. As the First Nations education system is developed, a new relationship between First Nation communities, First Nations language institutes, cultural education centres and other education agencies will be clearly defined and supported financially. It will be the federal government's obligation to provide the funding necessary for the success of First Nations language initiatives.

First Nations controlled post-secondary institutes must develop and deliver Native language teacher education programmes designed to meet the needs of a First Nations curriculum. Programmes will be delivered in models consistent with the needs of First Nations communities and students. Provincial universities must recognize and respect the programmes that are developed and partnerships may be established in the delivery of these programmes. It is essential however that the integrity and authority of First Nations communities be honoured in any relationship, whether old or new.

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