



CHARTING OUR OWN PATH FORWARD
Education Forum 2017

First Nation Lifelong Learning
Table

Policy Development

Tuesday April 25, 2017

Context for Action

- The new relationship calls for the First Nations in Ontario and the government of Ontario to work together to identify and address common priorities and issues as expressed in the Political Accord and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC): Calls to Action.
- The new relationship establishes a basis to build upon, link to and coordinate previous, existing and future lifelong learning initiatives of both the First Nations in Ontario and the government of Ontario.

Background

- A proposed Strategic Plan was drafted and outlines five mutually agreed upon priority areas
- Priority Area 5 focuses on Policy Development.
- There are 3 objectives within this priority area:
 - Focus Area A – Classification of First Nation Schools
 - Focus Area B – Languages Immersion Programs
 - Focus Area C- Education Service Agreements, Articulation Agreements and Student Funding

Current Status/Activity

Focus Area A:

- Collaborative exploration of the possibility of creating a new classification for First Nation/federally operated schools
- In March 2017, an Task Team was launched to investigate the possibility of creating a new classification for First Nation/federally operated schools
- The Task Team is tasked with performing research and developing an engagement model for development of recommendations
- An initial meeting of the Task Team was held to discuss various questions and concerns First Nation may have regarding the classification of First Nation schools in Ontario.
- One approach that was supported is to engage our partners at this forum to explore further options and seek additional support to enhance the Task Team.

Current Status/Activity cont'd

Focus Area B:

- Collaborative exploration of the possibility of creating space for Indigenous Immersion Languages programming in First Nation/federally operated schools and the provincially funded education system
- EDU and MAESD will support research project in partnership with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit partners focused on Indigenous languages in Ontario
- The Indigenous partners have been collaborating with the research team to ensure that immersion programming in Ontario is part of this study

Current Status/Activity cont'd

Focus Area C:

- Review of legislation and policies that guide the use of funding provision to support the needs of First Nation learners and make recommendations on improvements.
- The FNLLT is in the process of building an archive of information drawn from the existing partners. Once the FNLLT Coordinators are in place and the process for ensuring adequate community representation is refined, a Task Team for this focus area will be established.

Classification of First Nation Schools

- First Nation elementary and secondary schools in Ontario are federally funded, but are considered as “private schools” under the *Education Act*
- First Nations have long felt the classification of First Nation schools as “private” is not appropriate
- First Nation schools are subject to the same requirements as all private schools in Ontario
- First Nation secondary schools that grant Ontario Secondary School Diploma Credits are subject to the same inspection process as all private schools in Ontario

Considerations for First Nation Partners

- Programs and services created for provincially-funded schools, such as the Specialist High Skills Major program, credit recovery and access to e-Learning Ontario, are not available to Ontario private schools
- A new classification would enable capacity building support and access to beneficial programs and services for Indigenous students which are currently not available and allow First Nation schools to receive those benefits without setting a precedent for all schools currently classified as private

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the best way to engage with your communities?
2. Who should be involved in the engagement?
3. What is the role of the First Nation Lifelong Learning Table?
4. What are some of the challenges that the current classification/engagement with the ministry present?
5. How can the Ministry of Education support enhanced collaboration between the provincially-funded education system and First Nation schools to help build greater capacity (e.g. professional development and learning resources) in First Nation schools?