

ELEMENTS OF QUALITY FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Background

The study of a quality First Nations education system has only been topical for roughly thirty years, or after the National Indian Brotherhood issued the policy paper “Indian Control of Indian Education” in 1972. First Nations have consistently stated that to have a quality education system it first must be their own and it must have adequate resources. Thus, recognition of First Nations jurisdiction and authority to govern their education systems, and the resources to build their capacity, go hand in hand. The purpose of this paper is to selectively review key reports and the recommendations which have been made over the thirty year period which have affirmed foundational elements of quality First Nations education systems.

First Nations hold the strong view that they have the right of self-determination and to freely determine how they will govern themselves. They view education as a core jurisdiction of their governments and only require that the federal government fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities and provide adequate resources for First Nations education systems.¹

It goes without saying that prior to contact with Euro-Canadians, First Nations controlled the education and socialization of their children. McDonald describes the pre-contact forms of First Nations Education:

“The earliest forms of education, long before the Europeans came to this country, were where teaching was done by family members and relatives. Women and Elders were especially acknowledged as natural teachers of First Nation people. Traditions dictated that women and Elders transmitted the culture, language and skills necessary for children to grow up and survive in a harsh environment. They transferred customs to their families and gave advice when decisions had to be made. Children spent their days with their mother, collecting medicines, firewood, fetching water, working hides and making clothes. Storytelling provided children with lessons and examples to guide them in their relations with the Creator, Mother Earth, their families and their governments. Mothers and Elders were the repositories of knowledge and wisdom. They were the institutions which educated the young. The men of the community supported women in their natural role. This form of education effected the child positively because it addressed itself to the total community. The child had the opportunity to develop a good self-image as an individual and as a member of their First Nation.” (McDonald 2002)

Later when the federal government became involved in First Nations education, the central role was played by the missionaries through the establishment of residential schools. As MacPherson stated, the core of the education system was European in conception and execution. Its goal quite simply was assimilation. (Miller).

First Nations education was seen constitutionally as a federal jurisdiction and responsibility under its s. 91-24 British North America Act (1867) head of power. “The Act stripped First Nations communities of their political sovereignty, while imposing a system of indirect elected band

¹ National Indian Brotherhood, Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future – A Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction over Education, 1988.

council rule and pervasive segregation. Imposition of internal colonialism resulted in the denial of self governing rights, foreclosure of social and economic opportunity and restriction of language and cultural values...Through a combination of incentive and sanctions, Indian affairs sought to destroy the cultural basis of aboriginal society, transform First Nations peoples through exposure to Christianity and arts of civilization and assimilate (absorb) them into society as self reliant and productive citizens.” (Fleras and Elliot 1996)

First Nations entered into treaty relationships to protect their way of life and to guarantee non-interference with their societies including the right to educate their children in the ways they saw fit. Early treaties such as the Guswentah or Two Row Wampum signified this separate but equal relationship. Eleven post-confederation treaties contain provisions for education, notably Treaty #3 and Treaty #9 located in Ontario. (MacPherson 1991)

Recent Approaches

Indian Control of Indian Education identified values of self reliance, respect for personal freedom, generosity, respect for nature which have an honoured place in First Nations tradition and cultures. ² It identified Parental Responsibility and Local Control as fundamental aspects of First Nations education. The Paper stated the Local First Nations Education Authority should be involved in all aspects of First Nations education including curriculum development, staffing, budgeting, administration, development of adult education and negotiation of agreements with provincial or separate school jurisdictions.

“A community based approach means that within a community a unified approach is fostered and the people of the community are actively involved in the education systems. Educators within the education systems encourage community members to get involved in making educational decision, involve community members in the learning process and focus on knowledge and skills that enable First Nations children to function appropriately in their community and mainstream society. The curriculum content include knowledge about community cultures, traditions language, stages of development and learning . it means elders family members and community members are included in the learning process.” (Assembly of First Nations 1990)

Scholars in First Nations education history have noted: “In the following years, the full implementation of the policy proved to be challenging and full of legal and jurisdictional barriers. It was pointed out that the Department of Indian Affairs, while accepting the 1972 policy of Indian control, had re-defined "control" to mean a "degree of participation." This definition allowed the Department to move slowly, delegating programmes of administration rather than policy development and real management and financial control." (ed. Barman, Hebert, McCaskill, 1987) It has been nearly three decades since the policy *Indian Control of Indian Education* had been accepted by Indigenous leaders and the Canadian state. However, despite the advancement of educational policy, there still remains many unresolved issues regarding Indian education in Canada.” (Shugurensky 2001)

In Ontario a very important study was initiated on First Nations participation in the provincial education system. On June 30, 1976, the Task Force on the Educational Needs of Native Peoples presented its Report to the Minister of Colleges and Universities, the Minister of Culture and

² National Indian Brotherhood, *Indian Control of Indian Education* Policy Paper, 1972

Recreation, and the Minister of Education. The Task Force included representatives of the First Nations Political and Treaty Organizations in Ontario.

The Task Force on the Educational Needs of Native Peoples concluded that:

1) There are three basic objectives:

- a) The education of Native peoples should reinforce their culture and their identity (as they define them) rather than destroying them.*
- b) The education system should give Native people the option of living a native lifestyle, or of competing on equal terms in the general job market, or both.*
- c) The education system should be of use to native society in general, not just to formally enrolled students; this by means of adult education programs and so forth.*

2) Certain concerns are common to all Native peoples of Ontario, regardless of their status as Treaty, Métis, or Non-Status Indians, or their location:

- a) Native teachers and counselors be trained and employed in all elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions serving Native peoples.*
- b) Native peoples have the right to participate fully in making and implementing decisions which affect the education of their children.*
- c) The curriculum must be adapted to meet the needs of all Native students, so that the education they receive reflects their cultural heritage.*
- d) All Native students must receive adequate financial assistance to enable them to continue their education free from economic worries.*
- e) The governments of Ontario and Canada must not only actively encourage the retention of native cultural identity in Ontario, but also ensure that the non-Native population develops a heightened awareness of and respect for the native cultural heritage.*

3) There is need for an ongoing mechanism, representative of the Native people that would:

- a) oversee the implementation of the findings of the Task Force*
- b) monitor the Native education system*
- c) periodically evaluate the system and report on it to the Native people and to the Government.*

To that end the Task Force recommended to the Ontario Cabinet the creation of a Council on Native Education. Remarkably, many of the Task Force's conclusions continue to be relevant today.

Jurisdiction is Possible and Necessary

The 1982 constitutional recognition of First Nations Aboriginal and Treaty rights provided, from a First Nations perspective, the full recognition of the right of self-determination including a recognition of First Nations jurisdiction over education. However when the federal and provincial governments did nothing to implement the rights a series of First Ministers Conferences were convened between 1983 – 1987 which unsuccessfully attempted to define self-government. Constitutional processes culminated in 1992 with the Charlottetown Accord which recognized a justiciable right of self government, an obligation on governments to negotiate it within defined parameters, and a process to update the treaties and recognition as a third order of government in Canada. The Charlottetown accord did not survive a national referendum.

In 1988, a four year, six million dollar national review on First Nations education was completed and released by the Assembly of First Nations. It was entitled 'Tradition and Education: Towards A Vision Of Our Future'. The review analyzed four aspects of First Nations education: jurisdiction, quality, management and financing.

Tradition and Education affirmed that education is an inherent right which must be respected by all levels of government. In particular, First Nations governments must assure that children, teachers of their children and community members understand fully, that the concepts of self-government and self-sufficiency are related. Tradition and Education found, based on an analysis of obstacles related to effective preparation and implementation of First Nations jurisdiction over education, that all attempts at restructuring and reorganizing education systems must adhere to the philosophy of education as defined and articulated by First Nations.

The Assembly of First Nations states that this above statement must be fully supported by all levels of government affected by this transfer of jurisdiction over education. Formalized mechanisms must be in place to guarantee, that representatives of First Nations are directly involved in all pre-planning, assessment, preparation, implementation, administration and evaluation of a systematic framework for the transfer of jurisdiction to be effective. The role and responsibilities of the federal government as it relates to the transfer process must be clarified and funding for First Nations must be provided to gather needed information, conduct assessments, provide preliminary training, create an administrative structure and execute jurisdiction and management over First Nation schools. (Assembly of First Nations 1993)

The 1991 MacPherson Report recommended that the process set in motion by Tradition and Education should continue. On the First Nation side, MacPherson recommended a continued consultative process ... "especially one firmly focused on the identification and actual implementation of substantive education reforms in the near future." On the government side, MacPherson recommended the willingness to enter into serious discussions and negotiations with First Nations "about the process and substance of major reforms in the field of Indian education."

The preferred mechanism for moving forward in First Nations education is a Constitutional Amendment, dealing with the fundamental relationship between the government of Canada and First Nations and recognizing First Nations education jurisdiction. Given the complexity and difficult negotiations required for constitutional reform this mechanism is still preferred.

In the interim, MacPherson concluded that First Nations must consider other alternatives such as a national First Nations Education Act. This Act would be more comprehensive and empowering than the scant provisions currently contained in sections 114-123 of the Indian Act. Furthermore, repeal and reform of all sections of the Indian Act that relate to education are not adequate since the Act exists solely to administer paternalistic policies and practices that interfere with the exercise of meaningful jurisdiction over education and true self-government. (MacPherson 1991)

The 1988 Assembly of First Nations Report declared education as an inherent Aboriginal and Treaty right which the federal government has a legal and fiduciary obligation to fund First Nations education systems in exchange for the right given to Canadians to settle on and occupy First Nations lands. (Assembly of First Nations 1988)

Tradition and Education stated that the quality of First Nations education is based on traditional values which retain and incorporate the principles of wholeness, order, balance and respect for the

spiritual and natural world. It stated that the quality of First Nations education can be improved by the active involvement of parents, elders, local political leaders, educators and other concerned community members.³

McCue provides a good summary of the Assembly of First Nations study *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future*. He states it identified the following priorities for the quality of education: “First Nations maintain that mainstream education programs and curricula are largely irrelevant to the values, philosophies and needs of their people, families and communities. To obtain the best possible education for First Nations children, a comprehensive restructuring of education is needed. A new system must be designed to meet the needs of First Nations people, rather than forcing them into an alien system which does not meet their needs” and:

“The success of the school system depends on the quality of the curriculum. It should promote the contributions that First Nations have made within their own territories, to Canada and to the world. It should be value-based, contain a spiritual dimension, develop the cultural identity of the student and promote parental participation”

“The goals of First Nations education should:

- *prepare children to gain the necessary skills for successful living and contribute to the community;*
- *reinforce students’ cultural identity;*
- *provide students with a balanced capacity to function successfully in both the traditional value-based First Nations lifestyle and the mainstream of Canadian society”*

McCue (1999) states that the three key priorities for the quality of education are: a comprehensive restructuring of First Nations education; a First Nations education curriculum; and the development of First Nations education goals.

“Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future identifies a series of other priorities on the quality of education and they include:

- “Community input in all aspects of First Nations education is essential”
- “Culture should not be perceived and treated as another subject competing among many, but rather should become pervasive throughout the curricula”
- “The training of all education personnel is essential”
- “More First Nations personnel in senior management in schools
- The presence of First Nations education authorities, i.e., organizations, is essential”
- “Accelerate the training and recruitment of First Nations teachers and Directors of Education and Principals”

³ National Indian Brotherhood, *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future – A Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction over Education*, 1988, pp.11

- “Evaluate teachers and determine if their education objectives and values are consonant with those of the community”
- “Use resource people from the community to assist teachers”
- “Conduct needs assessments in each community regarding:
 - Education goals
 - Short and long-term education plans”
- “Establish a national or regional clearinghouse on research, best practices, curriculum and other First Nations educational matters”
- “Culture and language should be an integral part of the curriculum in First Nations schools”
- “Curriculum development should be a continuous and on-going exercise”
- “Curriculum content must be adapted to local needs”
- “The scope and quality of First Nations curricula must exceed that of the provincial curriculum where there are special needs in the First Nations communities”
- “Special education and early childhood education are integral parts of the curriculum in First Nations education”

McCue states that *Tradition and Education: A Vision of Our Future* also identified the following factors that affect the quality of education:

- Aboriginal languages and Second language resources
- Culturally-relevant curricula
- Learning styles
- Evaluation, testing and achievement levels
- Parental involvement
- Counselling

On resourcing McCue states that “any effort to bring some measurement of adequacy to the resourcing needs of First Nations education will require a joint effort between First Nations and INAC to address and devise a method or process to determine an appropriate budget for First Nations elementary-secondary education and its reform. A budget that includes the costs associated with the implementation and exercise of jurisdiction, the management of First Nations education, the development and operation of a national First Nations education system and the fulfillment of quality in the programs, curricula and delivery of First Nations education.” (McCue 1991)

Mc Cue recommended the following priorities for quality First Nations education:

SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

- A comprehensive First Nations management and jurisdiction structure for education that is accountable to First Nations parents and other stakeholders in First Nations education
- Acquiring and implementing jurisdiction in First Nations education
- A comprehensive evaluation and re-negotiation of the federal First Nations education budget

LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

Quality First Nations Education

- First Nations education curriculum
- First Nations education standards
- Training of First Nations educators, school and education administrators and managers
- Evaluating existing teacher training programs for First Nations teachers and administrators
- The development of First Nations education goals and philosophies
- The integration of Aboriginal languages and culture in the curricula

Jurisdiction in First Nations Education

- Enforceability of First Nations jurisdiction
- Monitoring the exercise of First Nations jurisdiction
- Evaluating the implementation of jurisdiction

Management

- An integrated and representative management infrastructure for First Nations education
- Monitoring and evaluating the management infrastructure
- Resourcing
- A process to negotiate jointly with INAC the short and long-term resourcing needs of a First Nations education system

In 1992 Confederacy of Nations passed Resolution 14/92 setting out Education Principles and endorsing the 1988 Assembly of First Nations Traditions and Education Report.

These *Principles of First Nations* assert that:

1. Education is an Inherent Aboriginal and Treaty right.
2. Education is the vehicle for transmitting our language, social, cultural and traditional values to our children. It is our right, as First Nations, to decide what our children will learn, as we have for many generations in the past, before the arrival of the Europeans on our shore. It is critical in the exercise of First Nations government that we, as First Nations, assert our jurisdiction over our education systems.
3. The government has fiduciary responsibility to provide adequate funding based on need.
4. Education is a life-long and holistic process
5. Funding for First Nations education is an investment in human capital for the future, and of long-term benefit for all.
6. Education for First Nations provides for economic opportunities and benefits for non-Aboriginal institutions and communities, e.g. tuition, child care, rentals, purchase of services, food, etc.
7. *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of our Future* ratified by the Chiefs-in-Assembly (1988) is the key document recognizing diversity in First Nations education and advancing the First Nations agenda.
8. All initiatives in First Nations education are based on a community-based, community-driven process.

First Nations have consistently put forward a clear vision of the type of education they want for their children. In 1993 the *Assembly of First Nations presented its Recommendations to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP)*

The Assembly of First Nations intervention stated that children are the First Nations most precious resource. They are the link to past generations, the enjoyment of the present generation, and the hope for the future. First Nations intend to prepare their children to carry on their cultures and governments. Because education shapes the minds and values of First Nations' young people, it is vitally important that First Nations governments have jurisdiction over educational programs which have such a lasting impact.

It is the Assembly of First Nations position that is the right of First Nations to safeguard and develop their languages, cultures, economies, institutions and traditions in order to determine and control their future development as peoples, according to their values and priorities, and to ensure the integrity of their societies. "It is our view that the education of our children is a fundamental tool in developing and strengthening self-government in our communities. Equality of access to education and life-long learning is a fundamental right of all First Nations children." (Assembly of First Nations 1993)

The Assembly of First Nations position is that "revision of the Indian Act is unacceptable to First Nations as a means of ending paternalism and establishing federal recognition of the inherent aboriginal right of self-government and jurisdiction over education. First Nations cannot exercise jurisdiction over education or any other program without full fiscal and operational control. The term jurisdiction means the right of each sovereign First Nation to exercise its authority, develop its policies and laws, and control financial and other resources for the education of its citizens." (Assembly of First Nations 1993)

The Assembly of First Nations stated that First Nations will determine the extent of the need for resources and allocation of resources to various programs and services required in their communities. First Nations expect the federal government to recognize and uncompromisingly support First Nations education authorities, and other designated authorities, as the final legal authority over the jurisdiction and management of First Nations schools.

The 1993 Assembly of First Nations paper stated it is the right and obligation of First Nations to provide comprehensive quality education which includes, but is not limited to:

- culture
- language
- traditions
- early childhood education
- elementary
- secondary
- special education
- post secondary education
- upgrading
- skills development
- basic skills training
- vocational education
- human resource development
- adult education

This right is not externally circumscribed. First Nations jurisdiction over education must also extend to citizens of First Nations beyond reserve boundaries who attend provincial or territorial educational institutions.

The Assembly of First Nations recommended to RCAP that the recognition by First Nations of self-government rights must be entrenched in the constitution and it must encompass the right of Aboriginal peoples as the first peoples to govern the land, promote their languages, cultures, traditions and educational practices.

The Assembly of First Nations demanded that all paternalistic administrative practices stop, in recognition of the government's devolution processes, the process of passing duties from one body to another has resulted in First Nations administering federal programs without being able to exercise authority. On behalf of First Nations they demanded that the federal government fully recognize its obligation to finance First Nations education and deal with First Nations on a nation-to-nation basis.

The Assembly of First Nations stated “our aim is to make education relevant to the relevant to philosophy and needs of First Nations people. We want education to give our children a strong sense of identity with confidence in their personal worth and ability we believe in education as a preparation for total living, as a means of free choice of where to live and work, and as a means of enabling us to participate fully in our social, political and educational advancement.”

The intervention stated the federal provincial and territorial governments must relinquish their administrative and policy functions and the federal government should retain its role as a funding source only. On behalf of First Nations they declared their jurisdiction over education for their people, and said First Nations will negotiate directly with the federal government under a negotiated bilateral process to finance education needs. The Assembly of First Nations called for

the establishment of an independent advisory council to support negotiations between First Nations and the federal government.

The Assembly of First Nations called on all levels of government must work together to implement the principles contained in Tradition and Education. It stated that the development of First Nation controlled institutions of higher education will bring education funds within the jurisdiction of First Nations. The advantages of maintaining a national framework for First Nations jurisdiction over education would provide a mechanism for the deliberations of problems and solutions, to act as a watchdog on federal, provincial and territorial policies and practices which might affect local First Nation education authorities and to secure funding.

It called for a national framework will also provide a mechanism for research and informed commentary on education policy for First Nation leaders and their representative organizations. A national framework mechanism will administer national educational initiatives and evaluate projects carried out under any program in which First Nation children or adults can participate, or from which they can benefit and disseminate the results of such evaluation.

The Assembly of First Nations stated that First Nations will establish, develop and maintain their own data banks which will provide accurate and state-of-the-art information on management systems, administrative issues, laws, personnel policies and jurisdictional powers. It said First Nations education will remain a holistic approach that incorporates a deep respect for the natural world. First Nations language and cultural values are taught and enhanced through education and the education process actively involves many partners - parents, the community, and the school. Linkages and regional co-ordination through data bases will enhance this developmental process. (AFN 1993)

Most recently, in 1996 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) released its massive report with over 400 recommendations. It observed the vital importance of education in achieving their vision of developing First Nations children and youth as First Nations citizens, linguistically and culturally competent to assume the responsibilities of their nations. It must also equip them with a strong positive Aboriginal identity. Education must develop the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. 4

RCAP also observed that the destiny of a people is intricately bound to how its children are educated. Education is the transmission of cultural DNA from one generation to the next. It shapes the language and pathways of thinking, the contours of character and values and the social skills and creative potential of the individual.⁵

Language is key to this goal. Prominent First Nations educator, Dr. Marie Battiste states that one of the primary purposes of education is to transmit culture to new generations and that Aboriginal languages are the basic media for the transmission and survival of Aboriginal consciousness, cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions and values. She stated that First Nations have stated two goals in education – to safeguard and protect their cultural identities and prepare their children for a modern world with the knowledge and skills necessary to survive and prosper. ⁶ First Nations see education as a lifelong process that begins before birth and long after formal education has ended. Lifelong learning and learning aimed to balance all dimensions of the person are intermeshed. (Battiste 1986)

²RCAP, Vol. 3, Gathering Strength, Chpt.5 pp. 434

³RCAP, Vol.3 Gathering Strength, Chpt.5 Education, pp.433

⁶ 6 Battiste, Marie, Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision, p.196

RCAP also recognized education as a core jurisdiction of Aboriginal self government enabling them to control all aspects of their education systems. First Nations maintain they have the right to government themselves and the right of self determination but successive federal governments have yet to recognize and implement this in a meaningful way.

In a study done for the Minister's National Working Group on First Nations Education, Nancy Morgan concluded that even though the federal government has a stated policy to recognize the inherent right it has been unwilling to recognize it.⁷

Morgan states that the First Nations right to exercise jurisdiction is also supported by international law, including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (Morgan 2002)

Paulette (1999) made the following observations⁸ on the failure of the current system:

- 21.9% of the First Nations (registered Indian) population had less than grade 9 education compared to 11.9% of non-Aboriginal population. **Thus, lower literacy levels are two times greater for the First Nations population when compared to the non-Aboriginal population in Canada;**
- 7.4% of the First Nations population had graduated with a high school certificate compared to 14.5% of the non-Aboriginal population. **Thus, high school graduation is two times lower for the First Nations population than the non-Aboriginal population in Canada;**
- 3% of the First Nations population completed university with a Bachelor degree or higher compared to 13.5% of the non-Aboriginal population. **Thus, university completion is four times lower for the First Nations population than the non-Aboriginal population.**
- 23.8% of the First Nations population had completed post-secondary education compared to 40.5% of the non-Aboriginal population

According to the federal Department of Indian Affairs: (DIAND)

- The Government of Canada currently spends approximately \$1.068 billion on First Nation elementary/secondary education and \$292 million on post-secondary education. Approximately 65 per cent of enrolment in elementary/secondary schools is occurring in 492 band-operated schools. The remaining 35 per cent of students attend provincial school. For those students, funds are transferred to local school boards operating under the provincial system to cover costs of tuition.
- From 1987 to 1998, the number of registered First Nation and Inuit students enrolled in post-secondary education doubled from 14,000 to approximately 26,000.
- Educational attainment rates for Aboriginal youth are lower than non-Aboriginal youth, especially among Inuit and Registered Indians. This gap is narrowed somewhat among older age groups, suggesting that Aboriginal youth are more likely to continue their post-secondary studies at an older age than non-Aboriginal youth.
- Currently, Aboriginal youth not attending school have substantially lower employment rates than non-Aboriginal youth, on-reserve being even lower, at about 16 per cent.

⁷ Nancy A. Morgan, *If Not Now, When? First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education; A Report to the Ministers Working Group on First Nations Education*, 2002

⁸ According to the 1996 Census data, for the population 15 years and over:

- The Aboriginal population is young and growing. The median age for those who are registered Indians is expected to increase from 25 years in 2000 to about 31 years in 2021. This is still far below the median age of 37 years for all Canadians in 2000.
- Over the next 20 years or so, the overall First Nation workforce (population aged 15 to 64) could increase by 45 per cent to reach approximately 628,600. On-reserve this proportion could increase by 89 per cent by 2021 to reach 457,000 if the growth assumptions hold true over time. The Aboriginal working age population will grow three to five times faster than its non-aboriginal counterpart. By 2016, the majority of the Aboriginal youth will be entering the labour force, while the majority of the non-Aboriginal population will be entering retirement. (DIAND 2003)

Conclusion:

The elements of quality First Nations education systems have been identified in report after report since 1972. First Nations educational achievement and demographic changes have been, to some extent, documented for a far longer period of time. The essential elements of First Nations education are:

- First Nations governance
- First Nations control over in-school programs, services and standards
- external First Nations controlled school support system
- the resources required to adequately support this infrastructure

It is possible to identify specific initiatives which have the potential for positive impact on the delivery of First Nations education programs, and these may be discussed in specific topic areas elsewhere in this Manifesto. However, targeted investments in First Nations education programming essentially amount to “tweaking” a system which remains largely under federal control. The common elements identified in report after report assert the need for First Nations control and the development of First Nations education systems as the foundational elements of quality First Nations education.

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