



SECOND LEVEL SERVICES |

Presented to Six Nations of the Grand River
Lifelong Learning Task Force

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August 17, 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Principal Investigator would like to thank the Education Manager and Education Research and Policy Analyst in the Education Coordination Office, in addition to all those who contributed to data collection throughout this project.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

First Nations have come a long way in designing and delivering education services since the 1970s. Numerous comprehensive First Nations education systems have come about to improve First Nation student achievement in communities in every corner of the country. Whereas some communities have built small schools boards reminiscent of public school boards, others have negotiated tripartite education agreements that have enabled large groups of First Nations to access a customized blend of second and third level services that reflect their collective needs, interests, and cultural values. Similarly, while some communities have created structures that provide second level services (such as human resources, information technology, Special Education, and curriculum development, etc.) in addition to third level services (such as education funding, standards and legislation), others have restructured existing community organizations and negotiated service contracts to fill gaps in order that all participating schools gain access to standardized services. Standardization promotes equity and efficiency, but that is not to say schools have no choice in services; there are various options for how second and third level services can be provided.

Regardless of the administrative design of these structures, First Nations' regional educational management organizations are configured to separate education governance from community politics, as outlined in education laws. The establishment of First Nations' education laws requires the resolution of education goals and definition of the relationship between the education authority and community leadership, but education laws also provide schools with the clarity and consistency they need from a daily operations perspective. A literature review and promising practices are presented in this report to help inform Six Nations of multiple community examples of second and third level service delivery, with several grounded by community-based education laws.

Primary research in this project aimed to a) identify the providers of second and third level services in elementary and secondary schools in Six Nations at present, b) identify any gaps in these services, and c) make recommendations based on promising practices developed by other language- and culture-based education systems across the country and around the world. Primary research involved online surveys and interviews and produced data on twelve themes; unfortunately, this data was limited. COVID-19 presented a host of challenges to completing this project and was, in no small way, the cause of the limited data.

Data findings are presented in this report with respondent comments. These findings are accompanied by additional data from a document review on education in Six Nations and secondary research on the public education system. Research on First Nations education systems clearly shows that First Nations students have extensive needs, and their needs are greater than their public school counterparts. Research also shows that First Nation school resources are much more limited than their public school counterparts. Funding shortages amplify First Nation student needs.

In addition to funding, jurisdiction, and administration coordination, key inputs required to create lifelong education systems as envisioned include community health, off-reserve supports, community partners, and language education.

Community research shows that schools in Six Nations are not receiving adequate access to second and third level services to meet students' needs. Schools in Six Nations are in need of professional second and third level services to fill gaps in areas that include:

- Governance
- Leadership
- Supervision
- Student achievement
- Finance
- Operations
- Information technology
- Human resources
- Business
- Legal services
- Program evaluation
- Research
- Professional development
- Curriculum development
- Resource development
- Student health and well-being
- Language and cultural education, and
- Special Education.

In Six Nations, these needs call for immediate attention, as has been recommended in a host of research reports conducted in Six Nations over many years. Six Nations of the Grand River has already developed several of the building blocks needed for a comprehensive education system, but second level services have never been researched in any great detail in the past. Six Nations intends to build a lifelong, world-class education system that meets students' current and future needs. This report identifies several major education milestones that have yet to be crossed in this regard.

It is recommended that Six Nations establish a Six Nations Education Law, obtain adequate funding for a comprehensive education system, and establish a governing body and education authority (with priority on elementary and secondary education at this time). It is also recommended that Six Nations authorize the education authority to provide second level services as listed above in addition to communication services to better support school staff, students, and parents.

Implementing these recommendations will assist Six Nations to develop an efficient, effective, and sustainable education system that meets community needs and interests.

INTRODUCTION

Six Nations of the Grand River is committed to charting its own course in education and eradicating the colonial education system imposed on it by the federal government and various religious organizations through the Indian Act. Six Nations seeks to recover full control over its education in order to provide community members with lifelong education opportunities that embrace and nurture the community's spiritual, cultural and linguistic identity. The community is working towards a vision in which all learners, from daycare to high school, postsecondary and beyond, are able to access education programs and services that promote traditional Haudenosaunee values while also providing the knowledge and skills required for personal success now and in the future.

First Nations lifelong learning is a process of nurturing First Nations learners in linguistically- and culturally-appropriate, holistic learning environments that meet the individual and collective needs of First Nations and ensures that all First Nations learners have the opportunity to achieve their personal aspirations within comprehensive lifelong learning systems (Assembly of First Nations, 2010). The Assembly of First Nations (2012) states emphatically that First Nations comprehensive learning systems require First, Second and Third Level services under First Nation jurisdiction, and these comprehensive learning systems must include programs and services designed to respond to the current and future needs of First Nations and improve learner outcomes.

The term “second level services” is used in reference to the three-level education system hierarchy common to most jurisdictions in Canada whereby the provincial government operates on the top (third) level, providing “third level” education services such as legislation and funding. School boards operate on the second (middle) level, providing “second level” education services and governance, through elected school trustees. Schools operate on the first (bottom) level, providing “first level” education services through teaching and assessment.

Indigenous students in the US, Canada and New Zealand share similar histories of culturally inappropriate education and poor academic outcomes; culturally responsive schooling is vital to Indigenous student achievement (Faircloth and Tippeconnic, 2013). Nation-to-nation relationship building has yet to materialize an education agreement between the federal government and Six Nations; however, after many decades of educational advancements in the community, Six Nations has recently renewed its commitment to undertake initiatives towards achieving this objective. Six Nations seeks autonomy to design its own culturally-competent education system and exert control over its education funding on a long-term basis.

In 2016, Six Nations completed a historical review of all of the initiatives undertaken over the last few decades that were related to recovering full control over education. In 2018, the community established the Six Nations Lifelong Learning Task Force for the purposes of developing recommendations to the community on a world-class lifelong learning education system in Six Nations. The Lifelong Learning Task Force (LLTF) commissioned a report in 2018 on language and culture revitalization which was followed by a language and culture five-year strategic plan in 2019. Deloitte was contracted in 2018 to identify the costs of building a comprehensive lifelong learning education system. A roadmap report ensued in 2019. The

Education Coordination Office was established to provide technical, administrative and coordination support for the LLTF.

These recent education studies in Six Nations confirmed the findings of previous studies which identified numerous obstacles for the community to overcome in order to achieve its vision for education. These obstacles include but are not limited to:

- Underfunding
- Lack of community and family engagement
- Poor student attendance
- Low post-secondary participation
- Decreased employment opportunities
- Decreased language fluency, and
- Risk of losing language and culture.

In 2019, the LLTF began to develop recommendations on a transition plan for the transfer of control over elementary education from the federal government. Once recommendations are finalized and the plan receives community approval, it will serve to inform the development of a legally binding education agreement with the government for elementary and secondary education. Regardless of the nature of the education system that Six Nation builds, it will require a balance of funding, governance, and administration to enable it to operate effectively and efficiently.

In the spring 2020, the LLTF commissioned this research study on second level services. The Literature Review and Promising Practices research presented in this report originate from education systems all over Canada and the world and are intended to provide Six Nations with valuable insights as it works towards developing recommendations on the governance and administration elements of a new education system framework.

This report outlines the research methodology followed throughout the project. Research was conducted on the current landscape and gaps in the provision of second and third level services in Six Nations to inform the development of a new comprehensive education system. This data has been organized into twelve themes that align with the services provided in the provincial education system. They are accompanied by the findings discovered by the Principal Investigator while exploring education history in Six Nations as well as second and third level services in the provincial education system.

This report is organized as follows:

- Background (description of lifelong learning; definitions of second and third level services; projects leading up to this original research; second and third level services in the provincial education system)
- Scope and Limitations (the original plan for undertaking this research; changes to the plan)
- Literature Review (the importance of second and third level services; descriptions of First Nations education systems; education system challenges; structural organizations for administering education services)
- Promising Practices (models in governance; legislation; policy making; human resources; information technology; student achievement; professional development;

language education; operations; student health and well-being; and public school board partnerships)

- Research Framework (research questions and methodology)
- Current Landscape and Gaps (survey data and historical research data on second and third level services in Six Nations as well as outstanding questions)
- Conclusions
- Recommendations, and
- References.

BACKGROUND

Schools are the first level of organization in the First Nation education system and bear the largest burden in educating children whereas in provincial systems, schools are supported in this important task through school boards or divisions (on the second level) and ministries of education (on the third level) that provide aggregated education services and supports to schools (National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve, 2011).

Provincially funded second level service organizations typically provide school governance and administration services; student support services; regulations, directives, policies, procedures, guidelines, supporting documents, and professional development resources to guide curriculum and teaching; and inclusive programming. Second level policies and procedures support third level legislation and/or statutes as well as core curriculum guidelines and support documents for Special Education (Peach, 2010).

Provincially-funded school boards provide second level services to elementary and secondary schools through coordinated, systematic processes founded on policies and procedures, including policies specifically designed to guide and control governance practices by elected school board trustees and administrative practices by staff specialists. Dedicated departments streamline the implementation of services so as to serve large numbers of schools consistently. Provincial school boards are structured and funded to not only provide high quality second level services but also conduct regular reviews of their performance in doing so. Their head administrator, the Director of Education, is evaluated by school trustees and is replaced if underperforming. Further, school boards are subject to formal review by the Minister of Education whenever serious issues arise that threaten public confidence. For example, the Peel District School Board recently underwent a review due to widespread charges of anti-Black racism, systemic discrimination in human resource practices, and serious issues related to governance and leadership.

English public, English Catholic, French public, and French Catholic school boards in Ontario are all subject to provincial legislation. Second level services are provided in strict accordance with the Ontario Education Act. There is a range of services that these school boards must provide to elementary and secondary schools: human resources, administration, building and property maintenance, curriculum coordination, learning technology, and Special Education, to name a few. French language school boards operate schools and classes in which French is the language of instruction. Similarly, Catholic school boards strive to create a faith community by integrating religious instruction, religious practice, value formation, and faith development into every area of the curriculum. Providing for students' faith and language needs requires additional supports above and beyond the standard second level services.

In contrast, First Nation education falls under federal jurisdiction and there is no comprehensive national legislative framework to guide and protect the delivery of First Nation education. The federal government funds second level service organizations but in a limited capacity, and not all organizations fall within the fiscal criteria (Anderson, 2004). Schools and other educational institutes within First Nations communities generally rely on the direct support of a network of community organizations to provide for students' needs (relative to their mental health, nutrition, and learning resources, etc.). First Nations second level service

organizations deliver a variety of programs and services which may also include delivering high school programs, engaging in curriculum development, teacher training, college and university courses, Special Education services, and advisory services. Out of necessity, some of these second level service networks extend beyond community borders.

Second level services were defined by the former Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada as services delivered to First Nations schools in lieu of federal programs or personnel, but this working definition is expanding through project-specific funding (Anderson, 2004). Second level services are described by the developers of the BC First Nation Education System, for example, as those services that include direct supports provided to First Nations communities and schools to help them improve First Nation student outcomes, such as professional development (e.g., coaching and mentoring), school review and improvement planning initiatives, data management supports, and assistance with information and communications technology capacity.

Not only are First Nations challenged by the shortage of funding for basic first and second level services, they are also greatly challenged in acquiring adequate resources to meet students' linguistic and cultural needs. The Assembly of First Nations (2012) emphasized the importance of First Nations' developed and controlled comprehensive data in education systems, since management and evaluation systems are critical to measuring outcomes and ensuring opportunities for continuous improvement. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) states that first and second level obstacles are compounded by the absence of third level education services. Functions provided by ministries include:

- Funding
- Setting and maintaining curriculum
- Instructional and professional standards
- Coordination of teacher education
- Educational policy for instruction, teaching evaluation, and discipline
- School reviews and evaluations, and
- Research and advice.

Whereas provincially funded schools benefit from consistency and standards in the delivery of second level services, many First Nation schools bear inconsistency and lacking standards in the delivery of second level services. There are few First Nation school boards in Canada that provide second level services and those that do exist were custom designed to function in a unique way in order to better meet the needs of the local community, or communities, they serve (Northern Policy Institute, 2014). Nevertheless, centralizing administration is no guarantee of improving student achievement.

The Assembly of First Nations (2012) identified additional obstacles to quality education on First Nations:

Resolving issues of early childhood education, language retention, academic failure, postsecondary education, adult literacy, and employment training is key to the future of all First Nations communities, yet these issues are beyond the federal government's scope for band-operated schools.

Many, if not most, First Nation schools operate from a deficit approach in Canada, working in isolation, rather than from a visionary approach as part of a larger, comprehensive system, due to the limits and restrictions imposed by federal government policy (Anderson, 2004). Anderson (2004) maintains that the federal government denies First Nations the authority to plan for their educational futures, to authorize educational institutes and community organizations to deliver programs that truly meet the needs of their students, to establish budgets for their schools, and deliver second level services.

The National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve was established in 2011 by both the federal government and the Assembly of First Nations and was mandated to identify ways of improving education outcomes for First Nations students on reserve, including improving governance and clarifying accountability for First Nation education. The National Panel (2011) explained the absence of aggregate education services and support in First Nation education systems as follows:

Following the dissolution of the residential school system, and the devolution of First Nation education to individual First Nations, virtually no thought was given to the necessary supporting structure for the delivery of First Nation education. There was no clear funding policy, no service provision and no legislation, standards or regulations to enshrine and protect the rights of a child to a quality education and to set the education governance and accountability framework....There is no broad system of education supports and services available to First Nation schools and, because of size and efficiency considerations, many individual First Nations are unable to effectively fulfill these functions themselves, resulting in gaps in services and supports and deficits in the overall education programs available to First Nation students...This results in a fractured, patchwork education system.

The National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve (2011) stated in its final report:

As members of First Nation communities, children are entitled to deliberate protection of their cultural identity and deserve positive measures to ensure the continuation of their distinctive languages, cultures and traditions.

The National Panel recommended the development of a First Nations Education Act to provide education standards and structures on reserves (Fraser Institute, 2014), which would essentially enable the establishment of school boards in First Nations communities, but the First Nations Education Act was ultimately rejected by First Nation chiefs who affirmed their inherent right to establish and control their own educational systems and institutions (CBC, 2013). Chiefs perceived the First Nations Education Act as legislation that would essentially replace one set of problems with another, and without building sustainable school communities rooted in Indigenous culture and consistent with Indigenous ways of learning (Northern Policy Institute, 2014).

The prospect of changing a community's education system is daunting, raising wide-ranging issues. Whereas First Nations education funding has been extensively researched, second level services have not - yet both are crucial to improving student achievement. Both second and third level services impact every education stakeholder in First Nations, either directly or indirectly. And both second and third level services require thoughtful planning to be effective. This is a subject never researched in any great detail in Six Nations in the past.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The consulting proposal submitted for undertaking research identified a plan to focus on second level services only. Research was needed to identify where there may be gaps in second level services in Six Nations and how they might be enhanced, thereby impacting all education sectors in the community.

The proposal was to explore provision of the following second level services in Six Nations:

- Leadership and governance (goals, strategic planning, funding, school reviews)
- Standards (literacy, numeracy, attendance, staff ratio, instruction, assessment, evaluation, reporting, student achievement, graduation, employment, Indigenous language fluency)
- Policy development (policies and procedures)
- Research (First Nations early child development research, labour market research, language and cultural education research)
- Human resources (health and safety, recruiting, supervising, and retaining educational institutes' principals/directors/executive directors)
- Professional learning (mentoring, on-site consultation, professional development)
- Business, legal and financial services (capital projects, purchasing, accounting, legal representation)
- Operations and technology (facilities maintenance, student transportation, information technology, data management, student tracking)
- Child/student well-being (mental health, sports and recreation, nutrition, early years developmental health and well-being)
- Curriculum resource development
- Haudenosaunee culture and language education (traditional and land-based education, language instruction, elders)
- Career education (co-ops, internships)
- Learning resources (learning technology, library)
- Special Education (paraprofessionals, diagnostic testing, accommodations, specialized equipment)
- Parent/caregiver and family engagement, and
- Communications (parents, students, community partners, media).

Since First Nation education falls under federal jurisdiction, it was anticipated that some data findings would require clarification to provide context as to how these services are implemented in a community where there is neither a common school board nor any requirement to adhere to provincial education legislation; however, the Education Manager recommended expanding the scope to include third level education services so as to provide a more thorough identification of gaps in second level services; this would also help to illustrate the impacts of gaps in second level services on first level services in the community. After the scope was changed, the following interrelated research themes emerged:

- Governance and legislation for early learning, elementary education, secondary education, postsecondary education, and adult employment training
- Leadership and administration
- Policy development
- Business and legal services
- Operations and information technology
- Human resources
- Finance
- Student health and well-being
- Special Education
- Language and cultural education
- Curriculum and learning resources
- Supervision and student achievement, and
- Program evaluation, research, and professional development.

Rather than explore each theme across the lifelong learning continuum in Six Nations, the scope was then narrowed to elementary and secondary education, but it was also expanded to include secondary education off-reserve, since approximately 650 Six Nations' students attend provincially funded secondary schools in nearby towns and cities (Deloitte, 2018). It was determined that researching second level services in schools off-reserve would provide an important contrast to second level services in schools on-reserve, despite the challenge of collecting data on how second level services in public schools benefit students from Six Nations, and where there may be gaps therein. After the research methodology underwent a series of changes due to COVID-19 (see Research Framework), the scope was narrowed once again to an on-reserve focus.

Changes in the data gathering methodology also commanded a shift in the scope to themes that incorporated second and third level services on reserve, as follows:

- Governance and Legislation
- Leadership
- Supervision and Student Achievement
- Finance
- Operations and Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Business and Administration
- Program Evaluation, Research, and Professional Development
- Curriculum and Learning Resources
- Student Health and Well-Being
- Haudenosaunee Language and Cultural Education
- Special Education

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In recent decades, the administration of public services for First Nations has increasingly devolved to the band level - and this is certainly true for education - but self-administration presents obstacles on the path to First Nations' desired goals of genuine and effective Indigenous governance (Rae, 2009). First Nation-operated education programs produce benefits and provide a certain level of control over local services, but they remain inadequate in serving the extensive needs of First Nations' children and youth. Fundamentally, at a structural level, First Nations lack the power to make major education decisions for their communities, primarily due to jurisdiction issues. Instead, First Nations education self-administration has engaged the provinces as active partners, so local governments supporting program delivery are often extensions of others' administrative mechanisms (Rae, 2009). Self-administration is not self-government.

This literature review examines issues standing in the way of comprehensive First Nations education systems, focusing on second and third level education service delivery, and attempts to evaluate how education self-administration has served First Nations. This review explores the importance of education governance and coordinated education services as well as some of the key inputs required to create lifelong education systems as envisioned: jurisdiction, community health, off-reserve supports, community partners, funding, language education, and structural organizations.

Second and Third Level Services

In 2010, the Assembly of First Nations revised Indian Control of Indian Education, the historic policy paper developed by the National Indian Brotherhood in 1972, in order to reflect current challenges and changes in education. First Nations Control of First Nations Education (2010) states that comprehensive first, second, and third level systems must include programs and services designed to respond to the current and future needs of First Nations and improve learner outcomes.

The AFN (2012) summarized the importance of third level "systems" as follows:

Third level systems support lifelong learning; and are holistic, high quality and linguistically and culturally based; third level systems are crucial to the implementation of the UNDRIP and the Treaty responsibilities with respect to education, jurisdiction, and governance.

The AFN (2010) states that third level supports in a comprehensive First Nations learning system include but are not limited to:

- Learning resource development and publishing
- Data collection and management
- Research and development

- Capacity development and training
- Accreditation and certification
- Standards and measures of learning successes
- Assessment of learning institutions, programs and systems
- Employee pensions and benefit plans, and
- Other community-determined programs and services.

Similarly, the AFN (2010) asserts that a comprehensive First Nations learning system is characterized by second level supports including:

- Staff training and professional development
- Paraprofessional support
- Instructional support and service delivery
- Specialists and professional services, and
- Other community-determined programs and services.

First Nations Education Systems

First Nations' general philosophy on education focuses on the overall well-being of children to prepare them for life, and First Nations have been consistent in articulating this vision for decades. Further, their education goals may, or may not, relate to provincial education standards. Relevant education for First Nations students requires, from a First Nations' perspective, emphasis on the preservation of First Nations values, languages, and culture; parent and community participation; and preparation for "total living" including vocational, academic, professional, and life skills (National Indian Brotherhood, 1988).

The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) defines a First Nations education system as one that:

- Provides pedagogical and technological assistance
- Defines educational standards
- Supports professional development
- Conducts culturally appropriate research to rationalize the financial support required for first-rate learning environments
- Supports learning opportunities that begin with early childhood education and progress through elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, to adult skills training and employment, and
- Incorporates culturally relevant curricula based on First Nations knowledge and community-based language and culture programs, while also preparing First Nations learners to participate in Canadian society.

To this definition, the First Nations Education Council in Quebec (FNEC) adds that a First Nations education system is based on the view that "learning is a holistic and lifelong process, where learning occurs in both formal and informal settings such as in the home, on the land, in the community, or at school." (First Nations Education Council, 2009).

A comprehensive First Nations learning system is characterized by the Assembly of First Nations (2010) as one that includes:

- Pre- and post-natal programs
- Parenting programs
- First Nations daycares and Head Start programs
- Early years programs
- Elementary learning
- Secondary learning
- Vocational high schools
- First Nations colleges and universities
- Literacy programs
- Adult learning
- Special education learning, including gifted learning
- Cross-curricular learning, including music, dance, sports, leisure, fine arts, etc.
- E-learning and technology
- Sustainable development and environmental stewardship
- Libraries and archives
- Student support, including elders, guidance counsellors, etc.
- Parent and community involvement
- First Nations languages and language nests (for the language of instruction and other languages)
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Safe, healthy and adequate learning facilities
- Administration and coordination, and
- A community learning authority.

As such, key elements of the First Nations Control of First Nations Education policy framework are:

- Language immersion
- Holistic and culturally relevant curricula
- Well-trained educators
- Focused leadership
- Parental involvement and accountability, and
- Safe and healthy facilities founded on principles that respect First Nations jurisdiction over education (Assembly of First Nations, 2010).

Further, First Nations' developed and controlled comprehensive data, management and evaluation systems are critical to measuring outcomes and ensuring opportunities for continuous improvement (Assembly of First Nations, 2010; McIvor, 2009). These definitions and descriptions of a comprehensive First Nations education system are a significant departure from various education systems designed for First Nations in the past.

Jurisdiction

First Nations jurisdiction over education is fundamental to protecting, recognizing, and implementing First Nation authority in education. Studies from numerous sources (including the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, federal and First Nations policy makers,

regional First Nations organizations and tribal council technicians, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, commentators and academics) have all recommended the development and sustainability of adequately resourced second and third level systems for First Nations elementary and secondary education (Mendelson, 2009, as cited in Assembly of First Nations, 2012).

The residential school system, founded on assimilationist policies, was replaced by integrationist policies, developed in the 1950s, and devolutionary measures that began in the 1970s, purported to grant First Nations with local education control but which, in reality, do not (McCue, n.d; Assembly of First Nations, 2010; Rae, 2009). In a review of federal and provincial policy trends in First Nations education, McCue (n.d.) referred to a host of Self-Government Agreements (SGAs) negotiated in the 1990s with the federal government. From his examination, none of the agreements signed by First Nations in the Yukon, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Nisga'a region, James Bay/Quebec, or Ontario provides the First Nations with actual authority to make laws affecting curriculum, policy, or postsecondary programs and policies. In fact, these SGAs include terms that either the First Nation education system must be comparable to the provincial education system, or First Nations students must be able to move to the provincial system without academic penalty. McCue (n.d.) registers this as evidence that the federal government has abrogated its constitutional obligation for First Nations education to the provinces.

The federal government has legal responsibility for First Nations education as defined by treaties and the Indian Act. First Nations view Ontario as having jurisdictional responsibility for education but no responsibility for the delivery of education on-reserve. However, First Nations also recognize the need to embrace opportunities for the federal and provincial governments to collaborate to prioritize First Nation student success (Chiefs of Ontario, n.d.).

The majority of commissioned reports over the last four decades support First Nations jurisdiction over education and the creation of First-Nation controlled education systems, yet political will and funding remain barriers to fundamental change (First Nations Education Council, 2009; Chiefs of Ontario, n.d.; Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 2008, and C.D. Howe Institute, 2008, as cited in First Nations Education Council, 2009). First Nations need to be provided with the appropriate funding and autonomy to design education systems with the proper support structures in place to achieve their unique goals (Blackstock, 2016, as cited in CBC News, 2016). First Nations demonstrated quite clearly by their response to the First Nations Education Act in 2014 how a one-size-fits-all approach to First Nations education is never going to be acceptable.

The New Agenda Working Group, established by the Chiefs of Ontario (n.d.), argues none of the three basic models of First Nation education in Canada at present (federal schools operated by Indian Affairs, provincial and territorial public schools, and local schools operated by First Nations - with the latter often being under the administration of a local school board or education authority) are satisfactory from a legal, social or cultural perspective. Countless research studies in the past have pointed out critical flaws in First Nation education funding formulas and proposal-based programs designed by the federal government - programs that were introduced as second and third level education supports but which, in reality, create hurdles for First Nations and essentially prevent them from allocating funding to ensure resources address the expressed educational needs of First Nations at all stages of the educational spectrum (Chiefs of Ontario, n.d.).

Community Health

Beyond funding, the failure of education outcome parity between First Nations education and provincial schools is due to many additional factors: structural, economic, health and social issues (Drummond and Rosenbluth, 2013). The National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve (2011) also identified persistent, systemic and institutional issues that impede the delivery of quality education to First Nation learners, including:

- Deep socioeconomic and health inequities
- Higher rates of poverty
- Higher rates of youth suicide
- Loss of language and traditions
- Higher levels of infant mortality
- Higher rates of child apprehensions in the child welfare system
- Higher rates of youth incarceration and interaction with the criminal justice system
- Higher teen pregnancy rates
- Chronic disease, and
- Poorer life expectancy.

The National Panel (2011) reported:

Frequent failure to produce the academic results desired might be less due to inadequate or unsuitable teaching than to the barriers resulting from the context of students' lives. Insofar as learning barriers are greater in First Nation communities than in other Canadian communities, First Nation education can be expected to require a higher level of funding than is normal in Canadian primary and secondary education. This principle will also require a high level of service co-operation and co-ordination, often between three orders of government.

The National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve also reported that the rights of children to be supported when they have special needs has not been extended fully to First Nation students. Special needs assessment is limited and resources for special need students are inadequate in most First Nation schools. Only those students with moderate to profound special education needs are eligible for additional federal funding; those with mild to moderate needs are expected to be provided for within the funding and terms of federal elementary and secondary education (Chiefs of Ontario, n.d.). Special Education is but one of many second level services that many First Nations struggle to provide as they would like.

Off-Reserve Supports

For many First Nations students, attending school in publicly-funded schools off-reserve is not a choice but a necessity. This is especially true for secondary school students. In 2011, there were more than 5,000 First Nation students attending schools in 40 different publicly-funded school boards in Ontario under Education Services (Tuition) Agreements (Ontario Public

School Boards Association, n.d., as cited in Chiefs of Ontario, et al., 2013). Education Services Agreements (ESAs) outline the common services to be provided to all students as well as the additional programs and services (or equipment) to be provided by school boards to First Nations students.

Over time, ESAs and Reverse Education Services Agreements have become extremely detailed, complicated documents, requiring expert negotiations:

Many of these agreements have evolved into very relevant, forward thinking documents that speak to data-sharing, unique supports for student success, and the increased presence of Indigenous cultures and languages in all schools, amongst other matters (Ministry of Education, n.d.).

An Education Services (Tuition) Agreement Guide was developed in 2013 as a resource for Ontario school boards and First Nations engaged in this process. The challenges associated with getting ESAs and Reverse Education Services Agreements (RESAs) in place triggered the development of a working group that succeeded in amending the Ontario Education Act. The legislative process involved in facilitating Ontario First Nations students' access to education was enhanced in 2019 by the Reciprocal Education Approach (REA) which now enables students to choose the school that best suits their learning needs. Eligible First Nation students and their families are supported by the REA when choosing where they wish to study, whether at a provincially-funded school, a federally-operated school, or a First Nation band-operated school (Ministry of Education, 2019).

The transition from elementary to secondary school is particularly critical for Indigenous students who, at age 12 or 13, have to leave their communities entirely or commute on a daily basis. This transition is even more challenging for students whose learning is impacted by either socio-economic problems in their families and communities or by weak language skills. These issues are barriers to fitting into new school environments (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017). To transition successfully, these students need a great amount of support and early intervention by the host schools.

The integration of First Nations language-speaking students into mainstream school boards requires early identification of any language problems, followed by appropriate and timely intervention, in order to identify and correct delays in students' second language. Corrective measures, however, must also respect the need to maintain the first language (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017). Kativik Ilisarniliriniq addresses this issue in northern Quebec on an ongoing basis (see Promising Practices).

Secondary school students also need a 'significant adult' in their lives and mentoring from teachers as well as peers. General transition support from elementary to secondary school alone is inadequate. Students' sense of belonging is greatly enhanced from participation in programs that promote socialization, such as athletics. This is one means of integration into the school culture which is crucial to emotional well-being as a secondary school student (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017). The alternative to providing extensive supports for secondary school students off-reserve is for Indigenous communities to invest more heavily in creating distance education programs at home in order that these students do not need to leave their communities to pursue education. In either case, this level of need demonstrates the importance of incorporating education on these issues in teacher education programs (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017).

In recognition of the challenges associated with attracting and retaining well-qualified teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, integration aides, and behaviour technicians in Indigenous communities, McGill University has developed a graduate certificate program of five courses for non-Indigenous teachers who plan to teach in Indigenous communities. One of the courses is second-language teaching (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020).

Community Partners

In a research study for the First Nations Lifelong Learning Table regarding Ontario First Nation student well-being, Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting (2017) identified numerous examples of First Nation education funding creativity: One First Nation established an agreement with its health services department to cost-share a position for a Physical Health and Wellness Educator; this was possible since the community had rampant diabetes. Adding this specialist to the school staff helped motivate students as well as staff and parents to become more physically active.

M'Chigeeng First Nation used High Cost Special Education funding to establish a position for a full-time mental health worker position (renamed to "Wellness Worker") in its high school. This wellness worker (who was also a certified teacher) was hired to provide immediate support to any student exhibiting signs of depression or distress and to assess the need for warm clothing, food, and/or referral to the community mental health team or family support team (Nancy Johnson Consulting & Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Similarly, the well-being study found that student achievement was greatly enhanced in an elementary school in Chippewas of the Thames First Nation after the school arranged for the community's health services department to conduct vision tests on all students. Eye glasses were provided within two weeks to all students who required them, greatly improving students' daily learning from that day forward (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017). First Nations have also developed strategic partnerships with local health and social service agencies to enhance student well-being through coordinated awareness activities on smoking, diabetes, sex education, etc.

Chippewas of the Thames also developed a partnership with Kids Kicking Cancer, a martial arts program that originated as an empowerment program for children in the Ronald McDonald House who were struggling with physical limitations due to cancer. Volunteer martial arts instructors provided lessons once a week to twenty uniformed students during the nutrition break to teach self-control and stress management techniques through meditation and breathing exercises. Teachers noticed an immediate improvement in the participating students' capacity to handle stress and anxiety; students applied the newly learned strategies in class whenever needed (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Consulting, 2017).

Many First Nations have found partnering with Right to Play Canada to be instrumental in providing students with access to school gyms and sports equipment as well as certified sports trainers (after school, in evenings, and on weekends). The socialization aspects provided through organized sports have significantly helped youth in many First Nations to build their self-esteem (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Further, partnering with community child and family services departments has helped some

First Nations to support child development through parenting workshops to teach parents how to play with their children, what to look for in child development (in terms of markers and milestones), and advice on what time to put their children and teenagers to bed so that they get adequate rest every night of the week, based on scientific knowledge (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Similarly, a coordinated approach is effective in early years programs to protect vulnerable children, as research shows that poor early literacy and language development is associated with other risk factors for child abuse. The Abecedarian pilot project in the north end of Winnipeg is a case in point. This project focuses on social, emotional, and cognitive areas of development but puts particular emphasis on language and traditional parenting, as led by an elder. One-on-one conversational reading skills are proven to expand language skills and stimulate children's attention (which is why the program teaches parents how to engage their preschoolers in talking about their reading each day). The project has had excellent outcomes since its start in 2012; graduates of the program stand above their peers in Kindergarten. They are less likely to be placed into the child welfare system. They are less likely to become adolescent parents. They are also less likely to engage in criminal activity. Some families have even come off social assistance as a result of learning the skills taught in this pilot project (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017; CBC, 2014).

Roots of Empathy is another program that some First Nation schools have found beneficial in promoting understanding of human needs, growth and connection among students. Some communities have found it to be so successful that they partnered with Seeds of Empathy to do the same in the early years programs. These programs have been identified as helpful in supporting teachings of the Medicine Wheel (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Research demonstrates that building good relations among students is essential. Students prosper in schools that are safe and respectful and free from racism, bullying and other forms of oppression. Programs that focus on creating positive, social school environments should be supported (National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education for Students on Reserve, 2011). The National Panel stated:

A collaborative approach involving all sectors and the adoption of a strategy to build the resilience of children and youth through meaningful supports to them and their families is required. This requires exploration, support and implementation of multiple, sensitive, and supportive approaches to community development in addition to enhanced opportunities for children and youth...First Nation education must be given the mandate to recognize the need for, and the capacity to provide, programs to overcome the many social barriers to children's learning, such as psychological impairment, fear, neglect, instability, hunger and negative peer influence. This will require considerable diagnostic and service elements in order to meet social and psychological conditions that stand in the way of student engagement.

Funding

Canada's fiduciary obligation to First Nations includes funding First Nations education, but the funding formula used to provide base funding to First Nation schools on-reserve in Ontario has not been updated since 1997, at which point it was capped at an annual 2% increase, i.e., not indexed for rises in the cost of living and teachers' salaries (Chiefs of Ontario, et al., 2013).

Some government officials have publicly denied such a funding gap exists, but according to CBC News (2016), federal bureaucrats advised the Harper government to lift the 2% cap on annual spending increases and stop reducing First Nations infrastructure funding so as to increase social program funding for Indigenous children.

In 2016, federal bureaucrats made a striking admission that First Nations schools are failing students not only because of inadequate funding but also because they lack the educational systems and structures required to close the educational gap (CBC News, 2016). In a briefing note for Minister Bennett, bureaucrats attributed low First Nation student outcomes to socio-economic conditions and the fact that many First Nation schools exist as a 'school house model,' rather than an actual education system designed to support individual schools (CBC News, 2016). This is old news to First Nations who already know that in every respect, First Nations elementary and secondary education is lacking when compared to the institutions, structures, staff, and funding in place for students in provincial schools.

Indigenous Services Canada announced in 2019 that a new funding approach would be implemented with improved access to predictable First Nations education core funding. The Ontario Regional Chief quickly pointed out what First Nations have been saying for decades: this is welcome news, but additional spending is still necessary to help on-reserve students catch up to provincial standards due to years of chronic education underfunding (Archibald, as cited in Blatchford, 2019).

First Nations education funding previously consisted of core, proposal-based, and targeted funding. Core funding continues to support basic classroom and school operations (e.g., salaries for principals, teachers, administrators and other staff; classroom and school supplies; operating and maintaining schools; guidance and counselling; bussing and other services to students; and paying tuition fees), but core funding now includes two funding streams that were previously proposal-based (First Nation Student Success Program and the New Paths regular funding), in addition to new resources to support full-time Kindergarten for children aged 4 or 5 and \$1,500 per student, per year, to support language and culture.

The federal plan is to set base funding at levels comparable to provincial systems across the country and, though it will continue to be formula-based, it will be driven by estimates of provincial formulas (with enhancements to meet First Nations' specific needs). Other funding outside the new formula includes the High Cost Special Education Program, which will be modified to be more predictable, with reduced application-based requirements, the Education Partnerships Program, and innovation and research funding (previously part of New Paths).

This new funding approach is challenged by those who foresee that the core functions of an education system are still going to be lacking due to the extensive governance supports First Nations schools require in order to make long-lasting impacts on First Nation student outcomes (White-Eye, 2019). Healing from the impacts of genocidal, assimilationist regimes requires resources that are not provided within the latest funding proposal model. White-Eye (2019) suggests an alternative:

A more appropriate First Nations model would be intergovernmental agreements using provincially comparable funding models that mimic provincial Ministries of Education budgets...in Ontario, a province that continues to assume a deficit in First Nation education funding transfers at the elementary and secondary level, closing the funding gap with non-

First Nation schools in the province using their methodologies will not translate to the substantial increases needed to make transformational change.

The approach White-Eye recommends above would support “research, data systems, traditional knowledge keepers as teachers, First Nation education learning resource development, highly contextualized Indigenous teacher training/certification centres, and policy hubs.” (White-Eye, 2019). White-Eye (2019) adds that accountability, power, authority and control, are left absent from the federal-provincial education funding comparability model, concluding that meaningful change will need “initial funding allocations to build local governance capacity and hire human capital in education policy, governance and strategic planning.”

Drummond and Rosenbluth (2013) contend that First Nations education funding should be looked upon as one of several inputs that need to change for delivering comparable education programs and achieving comparable results.

Funding should be viewed as an input rather than a goal unto itself, and other inputs include opportunities for establishing amalgamations similar to school boards in order to create economies of scale, capacity building of band administrations to better manage schools, opportunities to measure education outcomes as they relate to objectives and planning, and clear accounting mechanisms for outcomes and expenditures.” (Drummond and Rosenbluth, 2013).

Drummond and Rosenbluth (2013) acknowledge First Nation education funding deficiencies, but they argue that the objective of funding should be to permit education services comparable to the provinces in order that comparable education outcomes will be achieved, rather than focusing only on comparable spending; however, they also recognize that due to costs and needs, the required funding may well be higher than current provincial levels, and additional funding is needed to support new education arrangements and to address infrastructure deficiencies in First Nations schools. Conversely, they emphasize that funding arrangements should *accompany* education structure changes - neither precede nor follow them.

This chicken-and-egg situation is compounded by irreconcilable differences between First Nations and the government over self-determination. Raising First Nation education outcomes to levels consistent with provincial education systems is possible in Ontario, but firstly, Canada needs to collaborate with Ontario and First Nations to develop a process for joint education policy development based on a nation-to-nation, government-to-government, relationship. Then First Nations will be able to explore options and negotiate education agreements (McCue, n.d.).

Language Education

First Nations have taken a variety of approaches over many years to create education systems in order that community-based standards, policies and curriculum are established and maintained. The movement to decolonize the Western educational experience started for many by “Indigenizing” the curricula, the way in which curricula are delivered, and the vehicles by which curricula are delivered via teachers and school leaders (Grande, 2004, as cited in Faircloth, 2013). Indigenous language education has been central to curricula

transformations but, for many, the immediate hurdle communities face is the very preservation of language itself.

In the United States, Indigenous scholars and communities are leading the charge in language revitalization with hopes of protecting their endangered languages in order that they can come into daily use once again (Fishman, 1991; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Krauss, 1998; Reyhner & Lockard, 2009; as cited in Hermes et al. 2012). Acutely aware that the federal government's attempted genocide was one direct cause of Indigenous language loss, many Indigenous people in Canada are also personally dedicated, passionate, and politically active in protecting their ancestors' languages (Hermes, et al., 2012).

Language revitalization, recognition and protection are believed to be critical to the survival of First Nations culture and systems of belief, and Indigenous groups advocate for preservation activities to save what remains of endangered languages before it is too late (Blair et al., 2002; Penfield, et al., 2008; as cited in McIvor, 2009). Indigenous language nest immersion programs have since been developed at Indigenous preschools and elementary schools across Canada, the US, and internationally.

For some Indigenous communities where language revitalization interest is strong, the issue is not *if* they should revitalize their heritage language but *how* and to what degree. Indigenous communities have not been in the decision-making roles in most aspects of formal education for generations. While there are important exceptions, the majority of successes and progress since the 1970s have been at the administrative level, not the classroom level (McCarty, 2009, as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012). The majority of Native American children both on and off reservations have non-Indian teachers (McCarty, 2009, as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012).

Language education has been distinctly different in this regard in that language teachers have been primarily Indigenous people, and some scholars have argued that First Nations are moving toward self-determination in education (Tippeconnic, 1999, 2000, as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012), whereas others contend that language revitalization is at a cross between survival and resistance and that moving toward self-determination will require the reclaiming, uncovering, and reinventing of First Nations' theoretical understandings and pedagogical best practices at the community level as much as, if not more so, than the classroom level (Battiste, 2002; Bang, 2008; Hermes, et al., 2012).

For Indigenous communities and scholars there is a reoccurring problem, or challenge, to overcome which is the "superficial incorporation of culture into curriculum" through cultural-based education and teacher education (Demmert and Towner, 2003, as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012) that, in reality, represent a dichotomized thinking and structural racism of its own (Hermes, et al., 2012). Grassroots language activities risk becoming institutional, specifically through policy (Hornberger, as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012). Language is not content.

Most Indigenous communities committed to language education started by creating print resources (Wilson and Kamana, 2001, as cited in McIvor, 2009). Indigenous communities in Hawaii entered into this field by creating dictionaries, taping elders speaking their language, and incorporating the use of computers and interactive CD-ROMs. Developing curriculum in the form of print resources, or multimedia, is very common among Indigenous communities working towards language revitalization. Whereas taping and transcribing conversations of fluent speakers into English text was the common approach years ago, more sophisticated web-based technologies are in use today through the development of online dictionaries,

pronunciation guides, and word interpreters. FirstVoices is an example of a free, online language education program using text, sound, and video clips (McIvor, 2009).

By combining language education with advanced learning technology, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey has succeeded in creating multiple second level services for school students as well as their parents, families and community members in general (see Promising Practices). Lessons, vocabulary, songs, books, posters, dictionaries, lexicon and prayers are but a few of the many free access multimedia resources produced by Mi'kmaw language experts working in collaboration with learning technology experts. The Aboriginal Language website they developed was recognized by the Assembly of First Nations as an Aboriginal Language Initiative model project (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2020).

Language preservation involves documentation and the production of recordings of speakers, language engineering, etc. Two essential steps for creating technology and materials for language revitalization are to produce them in the community (making heritage language learners an active part of the process) and to capture language in context rather than artificially constructing language for teaching - if the goal of revitalization is intergenerational transmission in heritage mother tongues (Fishman, 2000; Hinton, 2009; as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012).

In a research project on preserving Anishinaabemowin, researchers videotaped heritage language speakers and elders in lengthy conversations for transcription as a basis for producing learning materials. Rather than selecting a predetermined content subject and translating language for that subject (e.g., hunting, beading, or basket making), they focused on the context of everyday spoken language (Hermes, et al., 2012).

Hermes, et al., (2012) found at their “movie camp” that the complicated, time-consuming process of documenting and transcribing long conversations for community consumption systematically removed language use by community members – restricting it in fact to only those with the highest levels of academic skills and knowledge. In other words, the approach they were using to help preserve and promote the threatened language was actually having a counter-productive effect in the end. They determined that research approaches that embed documented conversations in sophisticated linguistic tools is at odds with producing educational materials for distribution and immediate consumption by learners (Hermes, et al., 2012). These researchers recommended recording shorter conversational videos (which can be edited to around three minutes, maximum), transcribing them more quickly, and putting them into user-friendly formats for classroom and community distribution instead (Hermes, et al., 2012). This framework of relationship and reciprocity is embodied in practices of inclusion (among participants) rather than hierarchy and exclusion.

Upon reflection of their research methodology, researchers found that fluidity and flexibility enabled them to shift their focus from language loss to living language; from documentation of fluent speech to engaging communities of meaning makers with variable mastery of language in processes; and from formalized content domains to discourses of home and informal life (Hermes, et al., 2012). This process shifts the paradigm away from approaching language revitalization and documentation as a process of resuscitation and hospice for a dying language; it privileges community empowerment over production toward playful engagement and relationship-building with a living language (Amrey, 2009; Eisenlohr, 2004; Hinton, 2009; Muhlhausler, 1996; as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012).

Again, if the goal is intergenerational transmission in heritage mother tongues, then use of Indigenous language in the home is critical. There is a direct correlation between the Indigenous communities with the highest numbers of Indigenous language speakers and the regular use of these languages in the home (Statistics Canada, 2011). This fact helps to illustrate the importance of taking a community-wide approach to language revitalization, as nothing less will be successful in the long term.

Researchers recommend taking a “life-span,” or whole-community, approach to language revitalization in which Indigenous languages are established as living, working languages in families and communities. Strategies for accomplishing this include hosting informal dinners, community events and ceremonies that ensure the language is used (and other languages are not), thereby creating an arena for language practice in the community (Hermes, 2007, as cited in McIvor, 2009). For example, two Pueblo communities in New Mexico host an annual community carnival with games and food booths run by fluent speakers who interact with language students while playing games and ordering/serving, thereby successfully bringing the language learning out of the classroom and into the community (Sims, 2005, as cited by McIvor, 2009).

The long-standing home-school cultural continuity gap is evidence that language revitalization programs limited to classrooms are but an attempt to create a one-way bridge to homes and families. Experts on heritage language acquisition and second language acquisition clash over issues of language fluency, use, and transfer within and across home and school domains, thus illustrating the need to consciously develop goals before engaging in language design, material development, and education.

Another avenue for applying the specialized skills and knowledge of heritage language speakers and trained language documenters towards revitalizing languages is to engage them as mediators in supporting speech communities to formulate claims about their linguistic (and other) human rights. These individuals are also essential specialists who can help to improve the living conditions in speech communities (especially among the illiterate) by producing culturally meaningful language education, particularly in health care and community development (UNESCO, 2003).

The creation of Indigenous writing systems is a task that might be more easily achieved by partnering with other speech communities (McIvor, 2009). The convergence of groups of communities into “language authorities” enables collaborative work beyond the imposed boundaries of their territory (Ignace, 1998, as cited in McIvor, 2009).

Following the collection, annotation, and analysis of endangered languages, the focus becomes active participation in educational programs (UNESCO, 2003). Language classes are the most common form of language teaching. Also known as mother tongue education, Indigenous languages are commonly taught as a “subject” either in school for children or in evening classes for adults (McIvor, 2009). This is the most common educational model for teaching ethnolinguistic minority children in schools using locally or nationally dominant languages as the media of instruction (e.g., in English or French in Canada). Mother tongue education programs have been growing in popularity worldwide since the 1950s.

Alternatively, bilingual schooling is universally recommended for formally teaching minority regional or endangered languages (but not at the expense of ethnolinguistic minorities). Research demonstrates that acquiring bilingual capability need in no way diminish

competence in the official language (Hague Recommendations on the Educational Rights of National Minorities, 1996 and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, as cited in UNESCO, 2003). In fact, a well-taught bilingual program can serve to reinforce language learning that is taking place at home. It will, however, not stop the erosion of heritage language loss in communities (Hinton, 2001b, as cited in McIvor, 2009).

The heritage language instruction model is used where language minority students use their native, ethnic, home, or heritage language in the school as the medium of instruction, and the goal is full bilingualism. Dual language enrichment models, in contrast, aim to support children to become bilingual and biliterate so two languages are used equally in the curriculum. Only one language is used in each period of instruction, with language boundaries established in terms of time, curriculum content, and teaching. This can be done by using the two languages on alternate days or using different languages in different lessons (but ensuring the minority language is not used solely to teach less prestigious subjects). The enrichment model seeks to develop and extend the minority language even further. Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, the school board of Nunavik (in northern Quebec), has recently researched these models and is seeking to apply them in its schools (see Promising Practices).

Still, bilingual programs tend to have less success in reviving endangered languages due to the dominance of English in North American society (Kipp, 2000, as cited in McIvor, 2009). Bilingual education is better suited to language maintenance than language revitalization, since bilingual education is based on the principle that the minority language is being used in the home and/or the student is already fluent in that language (Hinton, L., 2001a, as cited in McIvor, 2009).

Considering the alleged five or six years that it takes to make a heritage language learner highly proficient (Hermes, et al., 2012), there is even greater urgency to condense this time in order to protect languages close to disappearing altogether. Thomas and Collier (1997, as cited in McIvor, 2009) found that students must receive a minimum of four to seven years of heritage language only instruction in order to achieve success in bilingual education (which is troublingly defined as parity with native-English speakers).

Although evidence exists for the positive effects of bilingual Indigenous/dominant language education, it has not been enough to reverse language shift, leaving many Indigenous communities turning to a full immersion schooling model when possible (McCarty, 2003, as cited in McIvor, 2009). In Canada, a number of Indigenous communities are developing K-12 Indigenous language immersion programs as well with many focusing on immersion in the early years (First Peoples' Cultural Council, 2020).

Although the Maori of New Zealand are credited with creating one of the most successful language revitalization models in the world (and inspiring Hawaiians to follow suit), their language leaders started their research by studying the French immersion model in Canada (Benton, 1996; Warner, 2001; as cited in McIvor, 2009). Interestingly, the Maori have taught "English as a second language" for ages 5-18 since 1997 (Harrison & Papa, 2005, as cited in McIvor, 2009) and now Hawaii has Kindergarten to Grade 12 immersion schools and university-level programs in their language, with entire generations of speakers who have emerged from these programs (McIvor, 2009). They credit their success to active family participation in language education programs (First Peoples' Cultural Council, 2020).

Since 2000, immersion schools have greatly expanded in Anishinaabe communities in northern

Minnesota and Wisconsin; they define immersion as using the Indigenous language for all communication and all content taught (100% total immersion), through thoughtful scaffolding of learning content, as opposed to instant submersion in a language (Hermes, et al., 2012,). At least four Anishinaabemowin preschool/elementary immersion programs have started there since then. As of 2012, immersion and master apprentice efforts were the best known and most popular strategies used in these Indigenous communities to create fluent speakers (Rehyner & Lockard, 2009; Wilson & Kamana, 2001; as cited in Hermes, et al., 2012).

In spite of the growth of Anishinaabemowin immersion elementary schools and the fact that nearly all public and tribal schools in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin offer Anishinaabemowin as a credit subject now, second-language teaching methods and materials for Indigenous languages in the US public schools are nearly nonexistent, emphasizing the need for materials that can be used in both immersion schools and second language classrooms (Hermes, et al., 2012). Adult learners are in even greater need of materials that make use of technology to make practice time more efficient and effective (Hermes, et al., 2012). Free, web-based access to language knowledge has helped to level the playing field for adults and families to benefit from the work of language specialists, researchers, and heritage language speakers.

Some communities have found it effective to establish a local research centre in which speakers of endangered languages are trained to study, document and archive their own language materials. Literacy in the endangered language is useful to the teaching and learning of such languages (UNESCO, 2003).

An effective strategy to developing human resources and learning materials is to partner with community-based culture and language organizations. Another approach is for Indigenous communities that share a common language to unite to create a speech community. Collaboration between related speech communities is also conducive towards updating the language for modern applications.

For some speech communities engaged in this work, research and development is more easily accomplished by partnering with local research institutes or universities. Choosing specific research partnerships, largely with linguistic scholars, is helpful to learn about linguistic theory or on the attitudes of young people towards language loss and learning, to archive, and to produce effective learning materials in the language (McIvor, 2009). For example, the Tsi Tyonnheht Onkwawenna Language and Culture Centre's partnership with Queen's University has led to adult immersion day camps, a Mohawk certificate program that caters to non-Indigenous students, and a Mohawk language and culture program designed for members of the Tyendinaga community in which training counts towards a Queen's University degree (Lewington, 2018).

Some Indigenous communities struggle with the lack of official support and external social, economic, and political pressures to give up Indigenous languages (Barrena et al., 2007, as cited in McIvor, 2009), but languages can also be endangered by internal forces such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language. Pressures to advance social position, overcome discrimination, and secure a livelihood influence peoples' values towards language (UNESCO, 2003). Language endangerment may be connected to a lack of interest among the young in addition to multigenerational cultural shame that exists for many Indigenous nations (McCarty et al., 2006, as cited in McIvor, 2009). Speakers of endangered languages often consider their languages as backward and impractical, reverting to dominant languages in

child rearing and in formal education; language teachers typically switch to the dominant language once they leave the confines of their classroom.

One hundred years ago, Indigenous education deemphasized academic subjects (and, for that matter, Indigenous cultural content) in favour of vocational or manual training; today some critics argue Indigenous institutes focus too much on culture and not enough on academic subjects (Cole, 2011), illustrating the delicate balance needed in First Nations education.

Language revitalization is associated with opportunities for meaningful language use. French language education research verifies that student retention becomes an issue for Core French students (particularly males) once it is no longer a mandatory subject of study (Chan, 2016; Kissau, 2006; as cited in Arnott & Lapkin, 2019). Those who discontinue their French studies attribute their decision to change course to the following:

- Negative attitudes towards the Core French learning situation (perceived incompetence)
- School timetable constraints, and
- The lack of importance accorded to French.

Factors for discontinuing studies in Core French illustrate the relationship between students' values and their chosen subjects of study. These findings suggest that for students to pursue language studies in higher grades, they must have confidence in their ability to use the language and they must perceive language education as valuable. Alternatively, those who choose to pursue Core French once it becomes an elective subject demonstrate motivations including:

- Enhanced job/postsecondary opportunities
- Linguistic confidence, and
- Importance accorded to French (Arnott & Lapkin, 2019).

Raising awareness about language loss and language diversity will be more easily accomplished when meaningful, contemporary roles can be established for minority languages which meet the requirements of modern life (within the community as well as in national and international contexts). Economic and political support by both local communities and national governments is needed to establish such roles. Meaningful contemporary roles include the use of minority languages in everyday life, commerce, education, writing, the arts and/or the media (UNESCO, 2003).

Regardless of how First Nations set out to document and preserve their languages for language education, some researchers recommend that speech communities stop thinking of language as content (which is how it is generally viewed in school settings). It is more practical, in their view, to reclaim the “everyday” as culture and as the basis for curriculum content rather than trying to recreate culture by pulling language out of social context (Hermes, et al., 2012). It makes more sense, therefore, for First Nations to ask themselves how they use language, how it lives in them, and how they relate to words and use them to express themselves. It is inadvisable to create story lines that appear frozen in time, that use seasonal activities, that romanticize Indigenous culture, or retell traditional wintertime stories and leave it at that (Hermes, et al., 2012).

Instead, it is advisable to focus on common activities, create modern variations on stories, have elders engage in very contemporary or funny language exercises together, rather than

focusing on developing vocabularies for very specialized cultural skills or traditional practices that students would not be able to use on a regular basis (Hermes, et al., 2012). Researchers recommend incorporating contemporary expressions and concepts (in Indigenous languages) to capture young people's attention and interest (Anthony, Davis, and Powell, 2003, as cited in McIvor, 2009). Informal education is more "appropriate" when it comes to restoring language's use in homes (Hermes, et al., 2012).

This line of thought is contradictory, however, to the taxing efforts made by Indigenous peoples over several decades to create culturally competent, multipurpose language resources that aim to meet the curriculum expectations in provincial curriculum guidelines. If endangered language education of children and youth were not complicated enough, the act of curriculum development and the pressure to create material products for schools can be at odds with Indigenous epistemologies (Hermes, et al., 2012). The merging of academics and community members on language revitalization provides opportunities for collaboration as well as conflict. For example, the Arapaho fully implemented language as a subject in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 school system only to find four years later that it was making no difference in creating new speakers (Greymorning, 2000, as cited in McIvor, 2009). Speech communities need to specify their language goals and key performance indicators in great detail and early on so as to implement appropriately suited language education programs and services.

The Native language program developed for Ontario elementary schools requires students to develop their language skills and improve their use of language through study, practice and communication in all three areas of language use: oral communication, reading, and writing (including the use of Native language writing systems). Course curriculum was developed in Ontario for instruction in Cayuga, Cree, Delaware, Mohawk, Ojibwe, Oji-Cree, and Oneida. The curriculum guidelines set out the minimum expectations that students are required to achieve in these languages and to prepare them for success in Native language programs at the secondary level.

Even though the Ontario Native Languages elementary curriculum guidelines clearly state that the Native language should be the language of communication in the language class (and it is expected that correct form will be taught and practiced in the classroom), Native language programs in Ontario public schools aim to develop language skills in contexts that students will see as useful and relevant. The guidelines are not designed to make students fully bilingual (Ontario, 2001). The goal of First Nation language education in Ontario schools is "to inspire First Nation students with pride in their ancestral language and to motivate them to use it to communicate in their daily lives – to use it, in other words, as a living language that is part of a living culture." (Ontario Education Services Corporation, 2015).

Further, First Nations language curriculum in Ontario was designed to provide students with:

- A general understanding of the nature and function of language (which is meant to serve as the basis for the development of First Nation language skills)
- A foundation of language knowledge and skills in the First Nation language under study (that will enable students to communicate in their First Nation language), and
- An understanding and appreciation of the First Nation language as an expression of a distinctive culture (Ontario Education Services Corporation, 2015).

The goals of the First Nations Language Strategy developed by the Assembly of First Nations are to:

- Increase the number of First Nations people who speak their language, by increasing the opportunities to learn their language
- Increase the opportunities to use First Nations languages, by increasing the number of circumstances and situations where First Nations languages can be used
- Improve the proficiency levels of First Nations citizens in speaking, listening to, reading, and writing First Nations language
- Increase the rate at which First Nations languages can be enhanced, revitalized, and developed, so that they can be used in a full range of modern activities, and
- Foster among First Nations and Non-First Nations a positive attitude towards, and accurate beliefs and positive values about, First Nations languages, so that multi-lingualism becomes a valued part of Canadian society (Assembly of First Nations, 2007).

These findings help to illustrate the need for First Nations to carefully determine their language goals so as to distinguish learning interests that offer students the opportunity to a) develop a basic command of an Indigenous language that can be expanded through further study, b) become conversant, c) become fluent, d) become fully bilingual, e) attain native-like levels of proficiency, or f) restore language to community use for intergenerational transmission. These pursuits are different from one another and impact standards, curriculum, instruction, technology, teaching qualifications, and program partnerships, as well.

Assessment and evaluation techniques should align with the language education goals. For example, the immersion team of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma developed a “culturally responsive evaluation model” to refine and describe an open-ended tool to identify strengths and weaknesses in their program so as to ensure continuous improvement (Peter, 2003, as cited in McIvor, 2009).

Structural Organization

First Nations regional education management organizations have been designed to provide a customized blend of key second level and third level services based on community needs; by 2011 there were 15 such organizations in place across Canada. Examples include the New Brunswick Education Initiative; Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey in Nova Scotia, the First Nations Education Council, Tshekapesh, and Inuu Education in Quebec and Labrador; Treaty 3 Education, Nishnawbe Aski Nations, Union of Ontario Indians, Chiefs of Ontario, and the Indigenous Education Coalition in Ontario; the First Nations Education Resource Centre in Manitoba; the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Prince Albert Grand Council, and the Northwest Nations Education Council, in Saskatchewan; Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8, in Alberta; and the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations School Association in British Columbia (Assembly of First Nations, 2012).

These organizations generally include the extension or adaptation of provincial, western-based second level services, forming very unique paradigms for second level aggregate service delivery. Regional education management organizations in BC (and one in Quebec) administer the targeted federal programs (such as Special Education and the New Paths programs) on behalf of the government, as part of their second level service delivery (Assembly of First Nations, 2012).

Some of these organizations were established through tripartite agreements. First Nations have negotiated tripartite agreements with enabling legislation to build a system of education and to provide funding, a range of supports, and a focus of education attainment to improve First Nation student engagement and outcomes.

An education act is the main piece of legislation governing education in a jurisdiction. Education legislation provides authority for the creation of all the main features of the education system. Education acts set in law the powers and responsibilities of the governing body and administrators as well as the authority of principals and teachers, in addition to the rights and responsibilities of students and parents. Education acts are designed to identify the education standards that are to be upheld by participating member communities and also serve to guide the members in their daily school operations (School Advocacy Hamilton, 2020).

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey provide third level services as outlined in their respective education acts through sectoral self-government agreements, within the terms and conditions of the federal sectoral self-government policies and provincial statutes. Numerous other First Nations have developed, or are in the process of developing, constitutions with protocols for lawmaking, including making their own education acts to take precedence over all other education laws and policies that reflect the education philosophies and priorities shared among multiple communities.

The Cree School Board Agreement in Quebec is one example of an entity providing both second and third level services through enabling legislation within a comprehensive self-government agreement (through the modern day treaty process). Here the notion of local control is reconciled with third level authorities, co-created legislation, and the aggregation of schools and supports (Kirkness, 1999, as cited in Assembly of First Nations, 2012). However, as this school board has discovered, legislation compliance is impeded by multiple factors (see Promising Practices). McCue (2006) suggests that expecting one organization to undertake both second and third level services at the same time, and with the same staff, is both unfair and unreasonable, particularly in light of lacking long-term supportive frameworks akin to those provided to provincial school boards.

There is no question that First Nations are investigating promising practices to guide the design of appropriate education systems. Provincial education systems have longstanding experience and expertise in education governance and legislation that can be of tremendous benefit to First Nations seeking to establish their own comprehensive education systems. Those First Nations that have followed in the footsteps of public school boards have established three-level systems governed by regional school trustees, led by Directors of Education, and guided by extensive policies and procedures, albeit on a smaller scale and reconciled with First Nations values, beliefs and worldviews. The Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education is one example (see Promising Practices).

Alternatively, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation is developing a three-level education system by restructuring a number of existing local education service organizations to expand operations to serve the entire Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) region (see Promising Practices). NAN communities are aspiring to a model that resembles the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre in terms of using dedicated organizations for service delivery across the region (see Promising Practices).

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey presents an interesting and successful model of a regional education management organization that is building capacity among schools to assume greater responsibility over time through community school-based management (see Promising Practices).

The community school-based approach to education management has caught the attention of some First Nations who do not want to centralize administration through either a local or regional education authority (or at least not permanently). In contrast to Indigenous school boards, community school-based management was pioneered in Edmonton in the 1980s and has been strongly embraced by multiple Indigenous communities in Winnipeg, Regina, and Nova Scotia since then. The community school-based management model allows school authorities the flexibility to develop new and innovative forms of local decision-making (including parent/community governing boards) instead of charging a regional organization with this responsibility.

Community school-based management (also known as site-based school management) has also been adopted by the World Bank in its international education decentralization development projects in recognition of the need to introduce and build on best practices in community schooling.

Rather than constructing an additional layer, or second level, of education authority, some First Nations communities have assumed broader responsibilities for social service delivery for a greater measure of self-government in education. In the purest form of community school-based management, any decision that contributes to the instructional effectiveness of the school, and which can be made at school level, should be made at school level - giving far more latitude to principals, teachers, and parents than would be the case in either a provincial or Indigenous school board. The Chiefs of Ontario (n.d.) report that not all First Nations are interested in involving a third jurisdiction to govern over education in order to achieve the designated purpose of improving financial and performance management systems and implement community-based school success plans.

The Northern Policy Institute (2014) states that devolution to true school-based management through First Nations school governing councils might also provide incentives to improve learning and life outcomes for students, such as choice and competition; school autonomy; and school accountability – the same goals and aspirations of First Nations in Canada. However, the Northern Policy Institute (2014) points out that decentralization alone is not the answer for First Nations education:

Good education for First Nations children will come, not from managerial efficiency, increased funding, or even better physical plant facilities, but from improvements in school administration, teaching and learning. Turning the situation around for First Nations students will also require a major change in the way local schools are actually managed and run.

Faircloth (2013) supports other researchers' conclusions that First Nations education needs increased preparation of educational leaders and researchers who can provide "culturally responsive schooling" and support to parent and family partnerships. Effective leadership should not rest solely in the hands of a singular authoritative figure, but rather in the hands of those who are often viewed as being led rather than leading (Faircloth, 2013). Indigenous students, their families, and communities offer unique "funds of knowledge" that can, and

should, be treated as valuable resources to be honoured and respected (Moll et al., 1992, as cited in Faircloth, 2013).

Research on schools under community based management in the US shows that it took about five years for results to become evident and about eight years to yield improved student test results. This was due to the time required to build capacity to properly manage schools at the community level (Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos, 2011, as cited in Northern Policy Institute, 2014). Similarly, in another research study on community school-based management in the US, researchers found that community school-based management can be effective, given proper resources and training for the school to establish the following elements considered absolutely necessary:

- A clearly articulated vision
- A school council that is trained in school improvement planning, given resources to meet and communicate with the school, and willing to share accountability for teaching and learning with the principal and teachers
- A principal and school council with genuine authority over the budget, personnel, and curriculum, and
- Administrators and teachers with adequate training and time to implement the process fully and focus on introducing changes that directly affect teaching and learning, as opposed to getting distracted by power or housekeeping issues (Holloway, 2000).

Holloway (2000) found that the most successful models of community school-based management are characterized by a dispersal of power throughout the school, professional development as an ongoing schoolwide activity, a broad dissemination of information, and a principal who can both lead and delegate responsibility.

Conclusions

Clearly, research on second and third level services illustrates a number of inconsistencies and conflicts in views on both the necessary inputs to address First Nations education shortfalls as well as the steps to be taken therein, if not the end goals. Many questions remain as to which practices would yield better results for First Nations seeking to take control of their education systems. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of evidence-based data on the long term outcomes of First Nations education systems for one to analyze.

Future study is important to fill gaps in existing knowledge relative to the delivery of second and third level education services in Six Nations and how these services might be enhanced through the application of promising practices from other language- and culture-based education systems.

PROMISING PRACTICES

The promising practices presented below illustrate various approaches to designing and delivering second and third level services in Indigenous communities. The majority of these regional education management organizations provide a combination of services in elementary, secondary, postsecondary, and adult education and also include off-reserve student services.

These examples are intended to inform Six Nations of issues to consider as it contemplates a future comprehensive education system of its own. Nevertheless, other than reports on spending, there is minimal evidence-based outcome data publicly available at this time to confirm that these communities are successfully reaching their objectives.

Cree School Board and Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 1978

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975 was the first modern treaty in Canada, and was signed by the Cree and Inuit peoples of Quebec, the governments of Canada and Quebec, the James Bay Development Corporation, the James Bay Energy Corporation, and Hydro-Quebec. The Agreement gave the government permission to develop natural resources in James Bay, in return for recognition of Cree independence and funding, so that the people living in Eeyou Istchee could resume control of their governance, including education.

Three years later, the Cree School Board and Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, the school board of Nunavik (in northern Quebec), were officially constituted under a clause in the Quebec Education Act. This act was later renamed the Education Act for the Cree, Inuit, and Naskapi Native Persons. Cree School Board leaders negotiated for additional funding not long afterwards and now have the exclusive mandate to provide students in Eeyou Istchee with preschool, elementary, and secondary education, with support for their postsecondary, adult and vocational education and training as well (Cree School Board, 2020).

The Cree, Inuit and Naskapi were successful in protecting the education rights of their community members through the development of their education act. Nevertheless, they have poor student achievement results to report overall and are still in great need of ongoing support, even after forty years of operations as school boards. Researchers linked poor student achievement in these school boards with community socio-economic issues as well as challenges in retaining qualified staff in the remote north (Nunatsiaq News, 2018; Visser, 2014).

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq was created with a two-pronged mission to act as a regular district school board for all Nunavik residents but also act as an exclusive Inuit institution with unique jurisdiction and powers that aim to protect, maintain, and develop the Inuit language, culture and way of life. This organization has been the exclusive provider of academic services to the population of Nunavik since 1978 and now serves 17 primary and secondary schools and 6 adult education centres in 14 Nunavik communities. Services are provided in Inuktitut as the first language and in French and English as second and third languages (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020).

Many Inuktitut-speaking students must travel south to pursue secondary education; for those

with delayed English or French language skills, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq provides extra tutoring support in English and French as well as access to other integration and remediation services (Advisory Board on English Education, 2017).

When Kativik Ilisarniliriniq started operations in northern Quebec, it inherited “a fragmented school system comprised of federal and provincial schools,” but crafted a system that reconciles a Western education model with a traditional Inuit education model, while continuing to face the impact of a history of colonization and cultural oppression (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020). This was done by standardizing the existing education systems while incorporating instruction in Inuktitut and programs that reflect Inuit culture. The first strategic direction in the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq’s 2016-2023 strategic plan is to strengthen Inuit values, language and culture (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020).

The school board is governed by a Council of Commissioners, with 14 elected members (on a 3 year term) and 1 member appointed by the Kativik Regional Government; the Council is supported by two committees. The Executive Committee is responsible for making decisions relative to human resources, health and safety, material resources, finance, and educational materials. Each community in the school board has an Education Committee of locally elected parents (on 2 year terms) whose activities are carefully defined and guided by extensive, detailed procedures. Education Committee members act as advisors to school administrators and the school board on various matters including staff hiring, and they are paid a monthly honorarium.

The Director General is the top administrator and manages four Directors: Director of School Operations; Director of Education Services; Director of Human Resources; and Director of Finance. There are two additional arms to the administrative structure, with general administration and postsecondary education managed by the Assistant Director General. Physical resource management is a separate arm which is managed by another assistant director general. These individuals report directly to the Director General (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020).

The current policy in Kativik Ilisarniliriniq is for all Kindergarten to Grade 2 students to be taught in Inuktitut. Grade 1 and 2 students also receive 90 minutes of daily instruction in a second language. In Grade 3, half of the instruction is provided in the mother tongue and the other half is provided in a second language (English or French). However, the school board has been researching bilingualism instruction methodology (the heritage language instruction model and the dual language instruction enrichment model) and is now planning to change this language policy to promote bilingualism. The Board is planning to implement these changes once materials and teachers trained in maintenance bilingual education are in place (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2018).

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq has been offering a unique land-based professional development program for twenty years now for Inuit teachers, trainees, or other educators interested in science education, leadership, and Inuit knowledge of the land. Students on Ice is a two week expedition at sea from Newfoundland to Nunavut in which participants visit Arctic communities, science stations, and national parks and territories. Participants are required to develop land-based science lessons, learning tools, and pedagogical approaches; in return, participants obtain credits towards McGill University’s Teacher Certification program (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2020).

The Cree School Board's organizational structure and governance body are quite similar to those of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq and this board serves a population of nearly 5,000 youth in 9 northern Quebec communities. Despite poor academic results thus far, these school boards are both interesting models of organizational structures charged with the responsibility of addressing lifelong learning in Indigenous communities struggling to preserve and teach multiple languages simultaneously.

Kahnawa:ke Education Center, 1980

In 1968, the Catholic, Protestant and Longhouse factions of Kahnawa:ke joined together in education partnership, making an agreement to form the Kahnawa:ke Combined Schools Committee (KCSC), under the authority of parents, guardians and postsecondary students. In 1980, the Kahnawa:ke Education Center was established to administer all locally controlled educational programs and services previously administered by the federal government and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawa:ke. In 1988 the Kahnawa:ke Combined Schools Committee (KCSC) was mandated to maintain and uphold all legislation, policies and procedures, and govern the Kahnawa:ke Education Center (Kahnawa:ke Education Center, 2020).

The KCSC is comprised of a chairperson; representatives from each school; a community representative; two Mohawk Trail Longhouse representatives; and a postsecondary representative. The Directors are non-voting members of the Committee and three elders advise the Committee. There are fourteen additional standing and ad hoc committees in place to help carry out the work of the Kahnawa:ke Education Center (Kahnawa:ke Education Center, 2020).

The Kahnawa:ke Education Responsibility Act was adopted by the KCSC in 2000 and governs all aspects of education for three schools under the Kahnawa:ke Education System (Kahnawa:ke Combined Schools Committee, 2018).

Karonhianónnhna is an immersion, elementary school for all core subjects from Nursery to Grade 4. French instruction begins in Grade 4, and English as a Second Language is taught in Grades 5 and 6. The Kanien'kéha Owén:na Otióhkwa Curriculum Center is housed under the same roof and offers support to other community groups interested in developing community programs in Mohawk.

Kateri School offers a 50/50 English and French full-day program in the Nursery and Kindergarten levels, but students could take an 80/20 French immersion program for Kindergarten to Grade 2 instead. Grades 3 and 4 shift to 60/40 immersion whereas Grades 5 and 6 are 50/50 immersion. Students attend daily Mohawk classes in every grade.

Kahnawake Survival School was established in 1978 in protest of the implementation of Bill 101, Quebec's Charter of the French language; this school teaches core subjects and Mohawk from Grades 7 to 11. The total combined student population on reserve was 679 in 2016; the off-reserve student population was 310 (Kahnawa:ke Education Center, 2020).

The Kahnawa:ke Education Center (KEC) supervises all programs and services for Kahnawa:ke students in elementary, secondary and special institutions within the Greater Montreal Area, as well as those for postsecondary institutions in Canada (Kahnawa:ke Education Center, 2020).

The KEC's Education Services branch oversees Curriculum (staff of 6); Student Services (staff of 4); and the First Nation Student Success Program. This branch is led by the Director of Education and the Associate Director of Education. The Finance and Administration branch oversees Communications (staff of 2); Facilities (staff of 10); Finance (staff of 4); Human Resources (staff of 2); and Information Technology (staff of 2). Finance and Administration is led by the Director of Finance and Administration. The KCSC oversees both the Director of Education and the Director of Finance and Administration.

In a Kahnawa:ke community education study conducted in 2017, parents identified language learning as their second highest education priority (next to student learning in general). English and French skills were identified as necessary in order to do well in postsecondary education and/or obtain any employment they want in Quebec, whereas proficiency in Mohawk was linked to community and nation identity. Trilingualism was a goal among 68% of parents who participated in the study (Christine Huff Consulting, 2017).

In 2018, the KCSC developed a wide-ranging governance and policy manual to guide the administration and operations of the KEC. Policies address financial administration, parental involvement, grievances, information access and disclosure, etc., in great detail. These policies apply to Karonhianónhna Tsi Ionterihwaienstákhwa, Kateri School, and Kahnawake Survival School equally.

In 2020, the KCSC developed a draft constitution, by-laws, and draft legislation for education responsibility.

M'Chigeeng Board of Education, 1980

The M'Chigeeng Board of Education was established in M'Chigeeng First Nation in 1980, over a dispute on Special Education in the elementary school, Lakeview School. An education committee was formed which assumed control of the elementary school, replacing the programs and services implemented by the federal government with guiding principles based on Indian Control of Education. Since that time, the committee has been expanded into a school board, headed by a Director of Education, and several staff.

M'Chigeeng Board of Education administers programs in an early learning centre and in Lakeview School which has 22 staff. The Board also establishes policies to support band members transitioning to secondary and postsecondary education elsewhere; 62% of the graduates of Lakeview School have gone on to graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. In 1987 the M'Chigeeng Board of Education added adult education to its portfolio and created a Literacy and Basic Skills Program.

Lakeview School partnered with the Learning Bar and was the first to implement the Confident Learners literacy program created by Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute and the University of New Brunswick. The Principal adjusted the school schedule so that staff could receive professional development on the program in school once a week. Teachers and parents have noticed such vast improvements in the students' literacy achievements due to early identification and remediation that by the time students reach Grade 8, each student has a

complete report on his/her skill levels and deficiencies and how these were addressed over the years (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Similarly, the M'Chigeeng Board of Education established a partnership with the Ontario Recreational Kayaking and Canoeing Association. Through this partnership, school staff became certified to teach canoeing and wilderness survival. Once trained, staff taught canoeing and wilderness skills to Grade 8 students to help promote interpersonal communications and gain traditional knowledge. The Board is working towards organizing day trips with cultural teachers that would enable students to get increased exposure to traditional teachings on the land (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Similarly, a partnership with Manitoulin Streams prepared staff in Lakeview School to teach the technical skills involved in rehabilitating local streams using GIS mapping and microfishing. Then, with the support of elders, students developed increased respect for the process and cultural significance of fish egg fertilization as part of the cycle of life (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

The Board is represented on a number of regional and provincial education boards that advocate for First Nations education.

Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education, 1987

The Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education was established in 1987 and is modelled on the provincial education system with elected board members. Governance is based on provincial, federal and Mohawk Council of Akwesasne laws and by-laws (Akwesasne Employment Resource Center, 2020). There are three districts in the community.

The Tsi Snaihne School, their community school, has 185 students from Head Start to Grade 7, and 22 teachers and education assistants. Students are achieving at or above provincial standards in reading and writing; 87% of students were reading at or above grade level at the end of the 4th Quarter in 2018 (Akwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education, 2019).

The Kana:takon School is a Kanien'keha immersion school for students from Head Start to Grade 4. Instruction focuses on English language skills in Grades 5 and 6. This school has 144 students and 19 teachers and education assistants.

The Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School has 308 students in Head Start to Grade 8 and 33 teachers and education assistants. Head Start programs are licensed under the Day Nurseries Act, with a maximum of 16 children per class.

Although a higher education facility, the Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute is also part of the Ahkwesahsne Board of Education. Iohahi:io has 60 to 120 students, 20 teachers and education assistants, and partners with postsecondary educational institutes to offer certificate, diploma and degree programs.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of two members from each district (elected for a 3 year staggered term), the Director of Education, and two Education Portfolio Chiefs. The Board of Trustees meets twice a month; their first meeting is to carry on school board business including

presentation of the Director of Education's monthly report. The Trustees' second monthly meeting is for training (Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education, 2020).

Akwesasne schools follow a common mission, vision and values, and are guided by a 2019-2024 strategic plan driven by goals and outcomes encompassing programs in early years, primary, middle school, language immersion, adult, and postsecondary education. Areas of priority in the Strategic Plan are language and culture, student success, relationship building, and organizational excellence.

There are a significant number of written policies that guide the work of the Trustees and the Director of Education. Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education policies are extensive, inclusive of goals of education, the organizational structure of the Board, the responsibilities and performance evaluation of the Director of Education, administration, finance, human resources, program evaluation, school (parent) committees, student records, and Special Education. Policies also clarify the role of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (which is to provide advice, assistance, and appropriate financial resources) and the board's relationship with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education, 2020).

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is described in Policy Section 108 as the "senior governing authority for all policies and laws within the Territory of Akwesasne." This policy identifies education as a responsibility delegated by the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA). In contrast, Policy Section 202 describes the role of the MCA as the political unit of Akwesasne. The MCA is to operate within "portfolio structures with committees" that are responsible for deliberating on issues and presenting recommendations to the general Council; the Portfolio Council member then advises to ensure programs are resourced efficiently. In short, "the Council Portfolio structure separates politics from administration and places the responsibility of managing the programs on administrators and program managers."

Board staff include the Executive Assistant, the Transportation Supervisor, the Postsecondary Administrator, the Human Resources/Finance Assistant, the Operations and Maintenance Supervisor, the Postsecondary Manager, the Data Systems Administrator, and the Student Support Liaison. The latter three individuals manage the school board's postsecondary financial assistance program.

Secondary school program staff include the Student Services Coordinator, Native Student Advisor, 2 Native Resource Teachers, and a school board Foundations Teacher. These staff work in the secondary schools that students attend off reserve through Education Services Agreements with the Upper Canada District School Board and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario, for tuition and transportation for Grade 9-12 students (Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education, 2020).

The Upper Canada District School Board provides support to increase English reading and writing knowledge among those First Nations, Métis and Inuit students whose elementary education was conducted in their Indigenous language. Students from Akwesasne's Mohawk immersion school are encouraged by the Akwesasne Board of Education's Secondary School Program staff to pursue support from the English as a Second Language (ESL) Support Center.

The Akwesasne Board of Education operates a First Nations Student Support/Native Resource Center at one of the off-reserve secondary schools that students attend; secondary school staff who work for the Akwesasne Board of Education at the Native Resource Center provide

students with tutoring and homework assistance during lunch and after school. The Native Resource Center also provides presentations on student leadership and cultural awareness and coordinates cultural group exchanges, sweats, a multicultural day, college and university field trips, an Aboriginal postsecondary education information program, and a science partnership program with the University of Ottawa.

The Ahkwesahsne Board of Education Operations and Maintenance unit has a supervisor and 11 staff whose joint responsibility it is to clean and maintain all schools, school board facilities, and outdoor recreation areas, including meeting the standards of provincial regulations for playground equipment safety. Staff are required to ensure school gyms are equipped to function for community recreation use and as emergency shelters.

Similarly, the Transportation Supervisor supervises 22 bus drivers, as the Ahkwesahsne Board of Education has its own fleet of school buses that are compliant with the Ministry of Transportation school bus guidelines. All bus drivers are screened annually for drug use and are required to undergo CPR training, evacuation training, and additional professional development training. Transportation is also provided by the First Nation for Cornwall students. The Transportation Supervisor coordinates student transportation in conjunction with the transportation consortium for the community's school board partners for students attending secondary schools off-reserve.

The Ahkwesahsne Board of Education offers a food services meal plan for students that includes breakfast, a snack, and a hot lunch. Each school has a head cook who works with a certified nutritionist to coordinate the program and create a new menu for each school each month. Payroll deductions are arranged to simplify payment (Ahkwesahsne Board of Education, 2020). Off-reserve secondary school students attending Cornwall Collegiate and Vocational School are able to pick up healthy snacks or use the kitchen facilities in the Native Resource Center, in addition to accessing two mental health counselors on site.

Similarly, Ahkwesahsne students in the alternative education Foundations program are able to access healthy breakfasts, snacks, and lunches throughout the day at the Thompson Memorial Wellness Centre, Kawehno:ke. This secondary school program is funded by the Upper Canada District School Board and operated by an alternative school. Students take independent study courses (guided by two teachers and one instructional assistant), to either reintegrate into mainstream schools or complete their OSSD requirements. This program includes hands-on learning exercises, field trips, Cross-Fit exercise, Sons & Daughters cultural presentations and discussions, sweats, community agency presentations, and student leadership and awareness presentations.

In 2017 the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne developed a strategic plan specifically for Mohawk language that involves the collaboration of key providers such as the Akwesasne Economic Development Agency, Akwesasne Freedom School, Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute and the Native North American Traveling College. This plan is based on the understanding that “responsibility for language should be shared between individuals, families, districts, language communities and government.” The plan states that there are currently insufficient resources to support the preservation, use and revitalization of their language, however, so the strategy is to publicize the benefits of undertaking Mohawk language protection, promotion, preservation and revitalization to coordinate efforts between all stakeholders and secure dedicated funding to meet these requirements (Ahkwesahsne Board of Education, 2020).

The language action plan consists of steps to building capacity; lobbying and fundraising; curriculum and resource development; establishing a Mohawk language commission; marketing; and conducting a language health needs assessment. These efforts will be evaluated by establishing a Mohawk language accreditation board; incorporating a non-profit evaluation oversight board; monitoring and evaluating teachers and curriculum; measuring the increase/decrease of Mohawk language use within the community; and monitoring and evaluating fluency levels amongst children, teachers, and adults.

First Nations Education Steering Committee, 1992

The First Nations Education Steering Committee was established in 1992 as a First Nations regional education management organization focused on advancing quality education for all First Nations learners in BC. The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) has 122 members and provides services in the areas of research, communications, information dissemination, advocacy, program administration, and networking. The FNESC also shares current information about available programs and government policies, and building partnerships with provincial and federal agencies to communicate issues of concern to BC First Nations (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2020).

In 2006, Canada, BC and the FNESC entered into an Education Jurisdiction Framework Agreement which was soon followed by the passing of enabling legislation by Canada (2006) and BC (2007), authorizing participating First Nations to establish individual agreements with Canada to enact laws respecting education on First Nation land (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2018; bclaws.ca, 2020).

In 2012, the FNESC, Government of Canada and BC Government signed the BC Tripartite Education Framework Agreement to provide BC First Nation students with access to quality education programs whether they attend school on- or off-reserve. The Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA) expired in 2017, but the BC Tripartite Education Agreement was signed in 2018 which provided a new funding model for First Nations school funding and core second-level services to support First Nations learners (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2020). The Agreement addresses the following:

- Continued work with the Kindergarten to 12 education partners and other agencies to improve outcomes for First Nations learners
- Policy and advocacy efforts to achieve systemic shifts for the benefit of First Nations learners, families and communities
- Parental support activities, as requested, and
- Research projects and materials development, as requested (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2018).

Prior to 2012, government agreements with the FNESC included a commitment to consult with FNESC on matters that could impact First Nation learners, the collection of data, the reporting on educational outcomes, the expansion of First Nation curriculum, and a reciprocal tuition agreement (in which BC pays the same rate for provincial students to attend First Nation schools as that charged for on-reserve children to attend public schools). As of 2016, 47 British Columbia School Districts had a 5-year Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement in effect

with local First Nations and the Ministry of Education to collaborate to improve the education success of First Nation students - specifically by recognition of the traditional culture and languages as integral to student development and success.

Ongoing funding commitments through the 2018 Agreement include \$20 million annually with expanded second and third level services and language and culture funding (approximately \$2.7 million and \$14 million annually, respectively.) (First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association, 2019).

As part of the BC Tripartite Education Agreement, FNEESC and the First Nations Schools Association of BC work together to provide second and third level services including:

- Activities to further the education capacity of First Nations communities
- Leadership supports for First Nation School Boards and school principals (such as training, mentoring, and the distribution of relevant materials)
- Professional development supports for teachers
- Information and communications technology services
- Language and culture programming supports
- Special Education supports
- Local Education Agreement supports and materials
- School assessment and improvement planning assistance programs
- Curriculum resources and training, as requested, and
- Information sharing and training related to teacher recruitment and retention.

A 2013 study of First Nations education in BC attributed the “superior” student outcomes in First Nation Kindergarten to Grade 12 in the Province to three factors:

- Incentives for provincial school districts to consult with First Nations leaders and to embrace innovative programs with more community-based participation
- Comprehensive and regular monitoring of First Nation school performance in core competencies of reading, writing, and mathematics, and
- Provision of second level services by First Nations-run institutions to reserve schools (Northern Policy Institute, 2014).

Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 1994

Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute was formed in 1994 by the merging of the Waubetek Training Institute and Nda-Gkenjge-Gamig Educational Institute in the Manitoulin Island region of Ontario to meet the needs of learners of all ages in 11 schools in 8 Mniidoo Mnising Anishinabek member communities that operate the First Nation Student Success Program. A member of the Indigenous Institutes Consortium, Kenjgewin Teg is founded on Anishinaabe values and offers an early years initiative and Kindergarten to Grade 12 education services; Kenjgewin Teg Secondary School follows the Ontario Education Act. The organization also offers upgrading programs, postsecondary programs, distance education programs, general interest courses, additional qualification courses for teachers, and education consulting services for Anishinabek people and organizations.

Kenjgewin Teg describes its organizational structure as unlike a corporate board governance

model although it is currently structured into four departments, each led by a Vice-President who all report to the President. The Lifelong Learning Department employs the Dean of Pathways who supervises literacy and basic skills instructors, secondary school instructors, and a Pathways classroom assistant. The Dean of Postsecondary Education and Training supervises the Trades and Skills Manager, the Teaching and Learning Programs Coordinator, the Health and Wellness Programs Coordinator, the Skills and Training Programs Coordinator, and over 25 instructors. Additional staff in this department include the Registrar, Guidance Counsellor, Admissions Liaison and an assistant. By April, 2021, the organization is expecting to have the Dean of Technology Enabled Learning on staff (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020).

The Anishinaabe Aadziwin Department employs the Dean of Student Wellness Services, the Nutrition Service Worker, 2 Social Workers, the Language and Culture Worker, 2 Language Specialists, the Guidance Counsellor, various elders and knowledge keepers, and an assistant. The Corporate Services Department employs a Director of Operations, a Director of Finance, and the Director of Human Resources. Additional staff include the Information Technology Manager, the Custodian, the Maintenance Worker, the Receptionist, and the Communications/Marketing Specialist. By April, 2021 the organization is expecting to have the Health and Safety Coordinator, Operations Generalist, and Human Resources Assistant on staff (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020).

The Institutional Planning and Development Department employs the Director of Quality Assurance and the Faculty and Staff Development Coordinator, and by April 2021, the organization is expecting to have the Curriculum and Writing Lead, Policy Analyst, Special Projects Lead, and Institutional Development Team Assistant on staff (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020).

Kenjgewin Teg supported the Anishinabek Language Declaration made in 2011 by the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising that applies to students and employees within their community organizations (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020). In 2014 Kenjgewin Teg created a language assessment tool to determine employees' language knowledge levels. Three years later, the organization conducted a comprehensive review of current and prior assessment initiatives, resulting in a defined continuum for rating Anishinaabe language proficiency. The language assessment is one step towards ensuring "individuals employed in the UCCMM First Nations territory will perform and provide all work and service functions in their ancestral language by the year 2030." (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2019).

Kenjgewin Teg is governed by a board of directors (consisting of representatives from each member nation) and is currently working from a 5-year strategic plan that includes language fluency as a staff goal, with a performance measure that "each year...employees will increase their fluency in the Ojibwe language as demonstrated by the Anishinaabe Odziwin Testing Tool...and regular learning opportunities for the AO passport to learning." (Kenjgewin Teg, 2016). Kenjgewin Teg created the Anishinaabe Odziwin Passport to Learning to record and validate each student's personal learning journey, including a record of the number of hours of language and cultural development completed and the results of an oral proficiency interview with a fluent Anishinaabe language holder (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020).

The First Nation Student Success Program supported Kenjgewin Teg to work with the University of New Brunswick on building literacy in Kindergarten to Grade 3, with the intent of nudging students from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." This program was developed in conjunction with 32 First Nations keen to develop a scalable, evidence-based program, using

multiple approaches to build reading and comprehension skills on a defined path of 20 achievement levels. The program requires recording students' literacy levels as early as Grade 1 and as often as each week; students are kept informed on the results of their literacy tests. Confident Learners includes First Nations content, supports EQAO skill development, and promotes First Nations teachers' professional development (Nancy Johnson Consulting and Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2017).

Kenjgewin Teg also has a partnership with the Rainbow District School Board to allow students to participate in an Outdoor Education Program. Students from Kenjgewin Teg Secondary School can join students from Manitoulin Secondary School to take a basic outdoor/survival skills, 4-credit program that leads to certification (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2020).

Kenjgewin Teg is developing a new education system framework based on an Anishinabek clan system of governance in which education and purpose are identified as "student growth" and "finding life purpose based on clan roles and responsibilities." This organization's strategic plan identifies four key elements to implementation:

- An organizational structure and leadership practices (as opposed to a corporate board governance model)
- Accreditation of Anishinabek content and knowledge
- Authentication and vetting of traditional knowledge and languages (roles and responsibilities of an elder council), and
- New terminology and language for teachings, politics and guidelines (Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, 2017).

Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, 1998

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs established the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre in 1998 to provide coordinated second and third level education services to First Nation schools in Manitoba. The Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC) now serves 58 First Nation schools from 49 First Nations based on best practices informed by academic research and education experience (Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, 2020).

The MFNERC Board of Directors is comprised of 2 representatives from each participating First Nation in addition to 2 regional members appointed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

The MFNERC is led by an Executive Director and Associate Executive Director and is organized into 6 departments, each led by a Director: Special Education; Programs; Operations; Human Resources; Finance; and Research and Development. Staff number over 200 and are primarily First Nations (76%) and highly educated (66% have bachelor's degrees and 24% have graduate or doctorate degrees). (Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, 2019).

In 2016, ten Manitoba First Nations delegated the administration and management of their schools to the MFNERC. A year later, an education governance agreement by the participating First Nations, the MFNERC, and Canada established the Manitoba First Nations School System,

the first of its kind in Canada. The MFNERC Board of Directors approves policies and procedures for the operation of both MFNERC and the Manitoba First Nations School System.

Fifteen First Nation schools are now members of the Manitoba First Nations School System (MFNSS) which was designed to recognize the importance of First Nations languages, cultures and land-based learning. These schools are now able to access the programs and services of both the MFNERC and the MFNSS; however, First Nations may develop agreements with MFNSS to implement administrative responsibilities for other programs such as Jordan's Principle funding, too (Manitoba First Nations School System, 2020).

Branches of the MFNSS include Instructional Services with a staff of 24 (led by a Director and Assistant Director); and Facilities and Operations with a staff of 6 (led by a Director). The MFNSS is supported by a Local Advisory Committee; each participating community can appoint a representative to advise on local priorities.

All MFNSS schools use provincial curriculum and participate in standard testing. Data analysis informs practices.

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 1999

In 1997, nine Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia became responsible for the education of their children for the first time in over 100 years. The Mi'kmaq Education Act, a tripartite self-government agreement, confirmed the arrangement in 1999. The Act recognizes the right to local decision-making on educational curriculum, including language, history, identity and customs; however, First Nation schools are required to adhere to provincial standards and diploma requirements (Northern Policy Institute, 2014).

The Agreement and legislation enabled the Mi'kmaw to opt out of the Indian Act and gain jurisdiction over primary, elementary and secondary education on reserve and management responsibilities for postsecondary education programs. The Agreement stipulates that the programs and services offered shall be comparable to those provided by other education systems in Canada so as to permit the transfer of students between education systems without academic penalty (Canada, 2014). Under the Mi'kmaq Education Act, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey is the corporate body, or education authority, established to support the delivery of education programs and services among participating First Nations.

In this First Nation community school-based renewal model, the Board of Directors is comprised of participating First Nations' chiefs. They are responsible for overseeing the distribution of over \$40 million a year in federal grants in addition to preparing their communities to assume more educational responsibilities through capacity-building (Northern Policy Institute, 2014). Mi'kmaw schools continue to follow provincial policies and practices regarding the delivery of education relative to the school calendar and student assessment, but Mi'kmaw language, heritage and culture programming figure prominently in the education system.

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey is organized into six divisions. Administration is led by the Executive Director, the Communications Coordinator, and an Executive Assistant. The Human Resources Department is led by the Director of Human Resources who is supported by an assistant.

The Finance and Planning Department is led by the Director who is supported by the Payroll and Finance Clerk, the Finance Officer, and the Financial Controller.

The Academic Services Department is led by the Director of Academic Student Services. The Department includes the Numeracy Consultant; the Office Coordinator; the Assessment Coordinator; the Community Liaison Statistician; the Library Consultant for Grades 7-12; the Technology Integration Specialist; the Technology Coach; the Student Services Consultant; the Administrative Assistant; the Performance Measurement Consultant; the Literacy Programs and Wellness Projects Coordinator; and the Postsecondary Education Consultant.

The Language and Culture Department is led by the Director of Mi'kmaw Language and Culture and supported by the Red Road Coordinator, 2 Mi'kmaw Language Consultants, the Mi'kmaw Language Coordinator, the Mi'kmaw Language Technician, the Treaty Education Consultant, the Sports Coordinator, and the Indigenous Sports Coordinator.

The Information Technology Department is referred to as Atlantic Canada's First Nation Help Desk and is supported by the Systems Analyst, the Operations Coordinator, the Client Support Coordinator, the Multimedia Support Coordinator, and the Network Administrator (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2020).

The Agreement aimed to improve Mi'kmaw parent and community engagement in the public school system as well, so it included an accountability framework in order that families and bands can hold schools accountable for the funding spent on educating their children. Also, Mi'kmaw teachers are able to access professional development in the provincial system free of charge. In return, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey shares its expertise in language curriculum and Mi'kmaw programming in public schools (Indspire, 2014).

The Education Partnership Program (EPP) in Nova Scotia is designed to help teachers from both Mi'kmaw schools and provincial schools learn ways of infusing Mi'kmaw language and culture into the classroom; the EPP aims to promote inclusivity in classrooms. The Master Cultural Apprentice Program operates within the EPP in which elders, teachers, and "Red Road Alumni" take part in a series of outdoor weekend workshops at camps equipped for ceremony, harvesting, history, language, culture, trapping, tanning, traditional medicine, storytelling, and traditional games (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2019).

The EPP facilitates the implementation of the Mi'kmaw Agreement which now identifies the areas of priority as literacy and numeracy testing, high school performance, postsecondary education preparedness, and Mi'kmaw language retention and enhancement activities and materials (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2020). The Agreement also addresses Special Education services, postsecondary education programming, education capital funding, school technology services, and tuition agreements with Nova Scotia's Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (for 18% of on-reserve students who attend provincial schools). Additional First Nations have since signed on to the Agreement that allows the communities to provide bilingual, bicultural Mi'kmaw education, impacting over 4,200 Mi'kmaw students (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2020; Indspire, 2014).

A key initiative of Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey has been the development of language immersion programs in three communities (one offering courses through Grade 12 with Mi'kmaw-focused teaching pedagogy). Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey also partnered to create a new Student

Information System which also now allows Mi'kmaw communities to use this data to develop a Mi'kmaw Language Proficiency Scale.

Over the years, member communities have also established partnerships with various local universities; the partnership with St. Francis Xavier University gave rise to the graduation of Mi'kmaw teachers certified in language immersion education. With the help of the First Nation Help Desk, Mi'kmaw language and immersion efforts have seen the creation of a 6,000 word Mi'kmaw online talking dictionary, videoconference language classes for daycares, and web-based Mi'kmaw courses in all high schools (Indspire, 2014).

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey succeeded in achieving the highest rate of high school graduation in Nova Scotia in 2006 (Northern Policy Institute, 2014). The high school graduation rate in the 2012-2013 school year was 88% (Canada, 2014) and rose to 92% in 2013-2014 (Indspire, 2014).

As the collective voice for Mi'kmaw education, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey facilitates the development of lifelong learning and is proud to report its achievements within the last year:

- Increased literacy and numeracy rates in elementary and secondary schools
- A 91% average attendance rate
- High school graduation rates of nearly 94%
- More than 600 First Nation students enrolled in postsecondary institutes, and
- A newly built school.

Detailed student achievement reporting is evidence of investments in both administrative technology and learning technology. The Student Information System was built to efficiently monitor strategies and goals for schools and create accurate educational support statistics (based on graduation, attendance and retention rates). To support the use of the Student Information System by educators and parents, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey produced eight short, "how-to" videos. The education authority is now exploring fibre optic technology to connect health centres, schools and band offices across Nova Scotia; First Nation communities will own all the infrastructure (Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, 2020).

Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2013

A remote Ontario education system is being designed in Nishnawbe Aski Nation. In 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Education, Canada, and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation signed the Nishnawbe Aski Nation tripartite education Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This is the first education agreement of its kind in Ontario (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The Nishnawbe Aski Nation represents 49 First Nations, with a population of approximately 49,000 members and 10,000 students, of whom 84% attend band-operated schools (Indigenous Services Canada, 2020; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2018). This agreement was made through the Education Partnerships Program process (EPP). Key priority areas of the MOU include: governance and administration; human resources; student support services; curriculum enhancements; and parental participation (Ministry of Education, 2020).

In 2017 the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) developed a three-level framework for this system in which a territory-wide oversight body will provide the mandate for third level services,

including education regulations; policies and procedures; core curriculum development; standards for student success; and staff salaries. Chiefs-in-Assembly will provide the mandate for the oversight body while First Nation Chiefs and Councils will bring the peoples' mandate to the NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly, and NAN First Nation members will provide community approval (Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2019).

In 2018, Canada and NAN signed an education Agreement-in-Principle for continued negotiations for First Nations' control and law-making authority over Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in Nishnawbe Aski Nation schools. Their goal is to build a solid foundation to move out from under the education sections of the Indian Act, exercise their vision of greater self-determination, and build a brighter future for students and communities (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2018).

Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Canada are working towards a final agreement that will outline how NAN communities will exercise their own law-making authority over both elementary and secondary education programs and services. Early childhood education, adult education, and postsecondary education are to be negotiated at a later date (Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting, 2019).

NAN's Governance Secretariat leads the work on Structural Readiness to further develop the framework for First Nation education across the territory. A resolution was passed to develop options for a comprehensive first and second level education system that will meet the education needs of all students in NAN territory (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2018).

Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, 2017

Through the Education Partnerships Program (EPP), the Ministry of Education, Canada, and the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 to work together to improve educational outcomes for First Nation students in participating First Nation communities. This MOU was designed to enhance their existing education resources and professional capacity; collaboration of knowledge and practices; and awareness of Indigenous knowledge and learning ways (Ministry of Education, 2017).

The priorities in the MOU are language and culture; relationship building between First Nation educators and public school boards; and transitions of students between First Nation and provincially funded schools (Indigenous Services Canada, 2017).

Kinoomaadziwin Education Body, 2017

In central Ontario, twenty-three participating Anishinabek First Nations signed on to the Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement in 2017 - a sectoral self-government agreement with the federal government. This agreement has three functions:

- To restore legislative authority to the members over their Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system (meaning member communities are no longer subject to the education provisions of the Indian Act)

- To establish and recognize the Anishinabek Education System and its structures, and
- To set standards and other requirements for the provision of education programs (Anishinabek Education System, 2020).

Through the Agreement, the Kinooaadziwin Education Body (KEB) is the central administrative structure responsible for overseeing implementation. The KEB describes its role as the body that “supports First Nations in the delivery of education programs and services and liaises with the Province of Ontario on education matters.” (Anishinabek Education System, 2020).

The Agreement also supports the transition of students from participating First Nations and provincially funded schools; advancement of Anishinabek language and culture; and engagement of parents and families in improving student achievement and well-being (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017). The KEB and participating First Nations signed a complementary formal agreement with the Province of Ontario (Ministry of Education) known as the Master Education Agreement that outlines commitments through a multi-year action plan. The Master Education Agreement (MEA) outlines how district school boards and participating First Nation communities will work in partnership in support of programs that address Anishinabek student success and well-being. This agreement was significant since 92% of Anishinabek students attend school off-reserve.

With representation from each participating First Nation, the KEB is led by the Director of Education who reports to a Board of Directors (comprised of representatives from each region). The KEB is organized into three primary departments lead by the Communications and Operations Manager, the Finance Manager, and the Culture, Programs and Standards Manager. Two committees support the KEB with implementation and operations.

Key projects informing the foundation of the Anishinabek Education System are coordinated to align with the traditional Anishinabek governance clan system and include:

- Turtle Clan (Law Makers): Responsible for Joint Master Education Committee operations and the Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund (an annual application-based opportunity to support and invest in locally developed/community supported education initiatives)
- Loon Clan (Internal): Responsible for system-wide standards and strategic initiatives
- Crane Clan (External): Responsible for student transitions; relationship building for Anishinabek First Nations and school boards; and implementation of data and the information sharing agreement
- Deer Clan (Social): Responsible for professional and leadership development; communications; culture and language; and student success and pathways
- Bear Clan (Health): Responsible for an inventory of health and social services accessible by Anishinabek students on-and off-reserve; and Special Education
- Eagle Clan (Education): Responsible for curriculum resources and course development; and Early Development Instrument (EDI) implementation; and
- Marten Clan (Economic Development): Responsible for the Transfer Payment Agreement; and research and evaluation (Anishinabek Education System, 2020).

The Nipissing First Nation Education Law was passed in 2018. Participating First Nations have developed their own education laws to support the AES (Nipissing First Nation, 2020).

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Six Nations has had discussions with Indigenous Services Canada regarding future education needs and the current challenges the community faces, including:

- Attendance, achievement and graduation rates
- Lack of technology and capital investment
- Lack of student support, and
- Language and culture programming (Deloitte, 2018).

Research conducted by Deloitte, in partnership with the Six Nations Lifelong Learning Taskforce, produced a high level costing analysis for an education system in Six Nations with provisions for early learning, Kindergarten to Grade 12, postsecondary education, adult education, and community learning. Despite lacking data on learner support, attendance, mental health, and family engagement, Deloitte developed an education vision, framework, operating model and budget. Deloitte also recommended additional research be conducted to help inform development of recommendations on an overall masterplan for implementation of the education system (Deloitte, 2018).

From coast to coast, First Nations in Canada strive to meet First Nations students' needs, with many communities, like Six Nations of the Grand River, exploring opportunities to form a comprehensive education system that can deliver second and third level services comparable to, if not superior to, those provided in the provincial education system. Six Nations requires baseline data on which second and third level services are currently being provided to its schools and by whom, to inform the development of recommendations on an education strategy.

There are wide-ranging options for second and third level education service delivery in First Nations. First Nations education systems are being designed in unique ways across the country and with many aimed at reaching lifelong learning goals. To that end, some First Nation communities have assembled their own local school boards (or other named organizations) to help coordinate education services, in conjunction with local health and social service agencies. Some communities have restructured existing community organizations to supply specific services such as Special Education in their schools or have established new entities to provide defined services such as operations and facilities management or language education to schools on an as-requested basis. Some communities provide schools with human resource services via their elected band council. Some communities have developed agreements with local school boards to provide student transportation services or professional development for staff, yet others have partnered with universities to provide schools with culturally appropriate research or curriculum for their schools. Organized sports partnerships have helped some schools to access services they could not otherwise provide themselves. Still other communities have collaborated to create an information technology network and infrastructure to benefit multiple communities and schools across the region to enable the development of a system that schools and parents can share for the purposes of recording and evaluating student attendance and achievement.

Research is needed at this time to assess Six Nations' community perspectives on how second and third level services are meeting the current and future needs of Six Nations students. This

research project is a rare occasion to step back and examine the overall delivery of services that directly impact students' education, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Research Objective

The objective of this research project was to examine the current landscape and gaps in the provision of second level education services in Six Nations of the Grand River, in order to develop recommendations on a lifelong learning education system in the community. Analysis of the provision of second level services could significantly contribute to the knowledge base of the Lifelong Learning Task Force by identifying gaps in the current education system that need to be addressed to support the community to reach its education vision of lifelong, language- and culture-based education system that functions at a world-class level.

Research Questions

This research project was originally designed to focus on answering the following questions:

1. What are the current practices within Six Nations of the Grand River regarding second level education services?
2. What are the gaps in second level services in Six Nations that need to be filled across the learning continuum?
3. What approaches might Six Nations want to emulate from other culture- and language-based schools and education systems in the delivery of its second level services?

Methodology

The Request for Proposals that was issued by the Lifelong Learning Education Coordination Office in February 2020 scheduled the project to begin in late February and be completed by June 2020; however, the project began in March 2020 and was extended to August, 2020 for final report writing and September 2020 for a presentation of the data findings.

The research questions above were developed to form the overarching research framework for this project and inform recommendations for increasing and improving accessibility to second level services in a comprehensive education system at Six Nations. The work plan proposed in the spring included a review of relevant education studies that had been completed in Six Nations informing the educational developments that had led up to this project, especially studies conducted on the linguistic and cultural needs of the Six Nations community as a whole. In the proposed research methodology, past and present second level education practices were to be examined through a review of reports conducted by either the Lifelong Learning Task Force or other education initiatives in the community, a review of second level service agreements in the community, and interviews with key informants.

Interviews were expected to gather insights on the first two research questions above from local educators in early learning, elementary education, secondary education, postsecondary education, language education, and adult education. Discussions were held with the Education Manager at the Lifelong Learning Education Coordination Office as to whether this data

gathering process would be best served through telephone interviews or in person (through focus group meetings in Six Nations). It was agreed focus group meetings would be the most suitable approach for collecting details on various stakeholder groups' views on services in the community, as it would allow participants to identify the services of greatest interest or concern to them and informally exchange their views with each other while allowing the Principal Investigator to gather data and clarify understanding of the key issues. It was expected that participants would be able to share their experiences so as to paint a complete picture of all of the providers of second and third level services in Six Nations, how these services are provided, and where gaps may exist, in their opinion.

A literature review was also planned as part of the original research methodology in order to identify promising practices in second level service delivery in language- and culture-based education systems in Ontario, Canada, and internationally. The literature review would inform research Question 3 above and provide context to the recommendations to be provided in the final report. The final report was to be presented to the community in the fall of 2020.

A literature review of academic journal articles was begun at this point and then supplemented with a grey literature review of relevant national school board association reports, national and provincial Indigenous education organization reports, provincial Ministry education reports, national and local news articles, and education advisory group reports. Literature was reviewed to identify successful second level service practices in other language- and culture-based school systems in Canada, the US, and internationally in order to provide Six Nations of the Grand River with a grounding on promising practices based on others' knowledge and experience.

In March 2020, when COVID-19 safety protocols were initiated (preventing any face-to-face focus group meetings from taking place in Six Nations), the research methodology was changed to hosting focus group meetings online through the use of the Zoom app. This new approach required a plan to keep the conversations focused and concise, so the Principal Investigator developed a list of questions for each of the research themes listed under Scope and Limitations (Human Resources, Curriculum and Learning Resources, Language Education, etc.), to serve as a framework, based on second level services that are provided in the Ontario education system. These services were intended for reference purposes to advance communications among participants during the sessions. Each meeting was to focus on one specific theme.

Various types of education stakeholders were then identified for participation in specific meetings. An informed consent form was also developed to outline the terms of participation in the research project to ensure ethics were observed in compliance with the research principles established by the First Nation Governance Centre: Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP). A meeting schedule was developed as well.

Unfortunately, by this point, much of the community organizations were forced to direct employees to work online from home, and stress and Zoom exhaustion had set in to the community as a result. Voluntary participation in focus group meetings was anticipated to be very limited at that time so the research methodology was changed a third time so that surveys could be used instead of Zoom meetings; this would allow participants to complete anonymous surveys when convenient - although it would restrict the data to very limited questions and not allow for clarification on any issues by the Principal Investigator. It was understood that brief surveys would in no way replace the level or quality of information that could have been

collected had the project been carried out as originally planned. This was a risk but was considered the best option, given the circumstances.

New, brief, online surveys were then developed to be completed anonymously by both education stakeholders in Six Nations as well as in two public school boards with high numbers of students from Six Nations (using the Survey Monkey app). Questions were designed to identify who provided second and third level services in the schools in the community, if anyone, and if there were any gaps in these services. Despite the very unique and complex, individualized nature of second level and third level service implementation in First Nation schools, and in Six Nations schools in particular, on-reserve surveys were intended to gather baseline data to identify the primary provider of individual services in schools, and associated gaps, if nothing else.

A final question was included in each survey to determine if there was any support for second and third level services to be centralized in the community in the future as had been recommended in previous community education studies.

The Principal Investigator completed research applications for the Grand Erie District School Board and the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board with hopes of obtaining permission to issue surveys to school board staff; however, survey questions for on-reserve education stakeholders could not be effectively combined with survey questions for off-reserve education stakeholders (in the school boards). The methodology was changed again to develop a separate set of surveys for off-reserve education stakeholders, but as the school year was soon coming to a close, the decision was made to limit the off-reserve surveys to parents of students in secondary schools off reserve, as they could be surveyed at a later date and from within the community. This decision meant school board permission would no longer be necessary, so the applications were not submitted to the school boards.

A promotional poster was then developed for sharing a weblink to the on-reserve surveys from the Six Nations website and on the Lifelong Learning Task Force FaceBook page. A survey distribution plan was made, and numerous group emails were issued to members of the Lifelong Learning Task Force, school principals, health and social service agency managers, and band council department managers, with a request to share the survey links with staff, parents, elders, and any other interested community members. Participants had three weeks to complete surveys. Refer to the Appendices to see all twelve surveys. A \$200 Amazon gift card prize was announced to encourage survey participation.

Very few surveys had been completed by the deadline (June 30, 2020), so several options were discussed to determine the best course of action to take: extend the deadline to allow more time for on-reserve surveys, coordinate telephone interviews with teachers over the summer, or try once again to coordinate focus group meetings over Zoom. The decisions were made to extend the on-reserve survey deadline by a week to allow more participation, postpone the off-reserve surveys of parents until a later date, and make one final effort to collect data on-reserve by engaging any interested elementary or secondary school educators to take part in informal, open forum focus groups meetings via Zoom. The Research and Policy Analyst issued advertisements in the local paper and sent out numerous survey reminders by email.

Data Results

A total of 24 completed surveys were collected on 12 different topics, representing the following Six Nations education stakeholders:

- Past and present school employees on reserve (Note: this includes federal government employees as well as teachers, language teachers, and school administrators from all other schools in Six Nations)
- Parents/guardians of children in school on reserve (including parents of a child in Special Education)
- Band council employees, and
- Elders.

One focus group meeting was held with education stakeholders, yielding additional data on the delivery and gaps in a number of second and third level services. This data was compiled along with survey data and is organized by theme (see Current Landscape and Gaps).

Past and present second and third level education practices at Six Nations were then examined through a study of published and unpublished articles and reports commissioned by Six Nations over many years. The review was not limited to school services alone but rather was inclusive of language data, cultural data, and health data, as appropriate, to reflect the current landscape and service gaps in Six Nations as a whole. Data findings were compiled relative to the research themes.

Data analysis focused on identifying opportunities for successful second and third level service delivery in order to inform recommendations for the development of a comprehensive system for the delivery of second level services across the learning continuum in Six Nations. The timing of this research project, along with multiple research complications triggered by COVID-19, significantly impacted data gathering - confirming that the original plan to coordinate live focus group sessions would have been more effective and would have provided more thorough context to inform the Principal Investigator's recommendations.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE AND GAPS

What follows is the data collected from surveys, interviews, and Six Nations' education document review.

In several surveys, participants provided consistent responses, but in other instances, their responses diverged, illustrating a) wide-ranging opinions, b) varying interpretations of the survey questions, and c) varying levels of awareness of second and third level services in the community.

Survey findings prompted the Principal Investigator to provide footnotes to clarify outdated data supplied by survey participants and to develop further questions for the Lifelong Learning Task Force to consider at such time as it develops recommendations for a new education system (see Outstanding Questions). Overall, data reliability is questionable due to the small number of survey participants.

Governance and Legislation

Survey Data:

The Education Governance and Legislation Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education governance and legislation services in Six Nations.

The federal government was identified as being responsible for setting policies and guidelines for the Director of Education, Principals, and other education officials, in the federal schools (Jamieson School; I.L. Thomas School; Emily C. General School; J.C. Hill School; and O/M. Smith School). Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The federal schools follow provincial guidelines*
- *Policies and guidelines should be developed in the best interests of Six Nations students, not imposed by any government.*
- *Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo was founded by parents and community members, clan mothers and chiefs; therefore, guidelines are directly associated with hodino:ni culture and traditions*

Policy and program requirements (governing programs for all students) are set by the federal government in the federal schools. This service is either provided by the school administrators or not at all at Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School, Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, and the STEAM Academy.

All elementary and secondary schools in the community receive funding for education from the federal government, but Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School's funding does not extend to funding for renovating or building a new school. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *Funding is far below that for students in the provincial system*
- *There is no funding for third level services*
- *Funding for school construction and repair is through the federal government; it is not adequate to address all issues*
- *As a principal, I often had to decide how to allocate the limited funding that was available*
- *Everlasting Tree School has a benefactor who provides funding*
- *KGPS does not currently have a school building but is on a waiting list with Indigenous Services Canada*
- *All schools are in need of repair*

Ontario is the primary provider of core curriculum, teaching resources, and lists of approved textbooks and other learning materials for the federal schools and the STEAM Academy. These resources are either provided by school administrators or not provided at all at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *Core curriculum should be based on Haudenosaunee knowledge and values*
- *We should have input into our own curriculum especially in the areas of Social Studies, Science and Health*
- *The First Nations content in provincial curriculum is negligible*
- *There is a lack of resources for the languages*
- *Adequate funding is not provided for the development of our own curriculum*
- *(There are) no gaps – all teachers collectively have ideas that best suit the children, and (we) have our own graphic designers who create resources*
- *There is a lack of textbooks and learning materials, etc., that are written by First Nations authors*
- *Some of the content of textbooks may be foreign to students who live in primarily rural areas; for example, not everyone may be familiar with wording like city blocks*

All elementary and secondary schools in the community use Ontario standards and guidelines for student assessment, evaluation, and reporting as well as Ontario policies for standardized testing to help improve student learning in reading, writing, and math, with the exception of Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School where school administrators are responsible for providing these services. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *KGPS and STEAM have to follow provincial guidelines to provide Ontario Secondary School Diplomas; they may develop their own standards and guidelines as well*
- *Schools on Six Nations had to complete EQAO testing that was full of many concepts that would be foreign to First Nations students ...schools also had to use provincial report cards*
- *We should develop our own reporting mechanism*
- *(The) current reporting system is too repetitive as many teachers use the same word bank*
- *Reports and assessments should be individualized*

Ontario registers and inspects the STEAM Academy and Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School as private schools that offer credits toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD); however, the federal government also inspects KGPS.

The federal schools and Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School observe applicable legislation as administered by the federal government. Emily C. General School also observes provincial legislation. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The Superintendent¹ of Six Nations schools lives on another reserve*
- *Communication with Indian Affairs was difficult to say the least due to the hierarchy of the federal government*

The last survey question inquired about support to establish a standalone body to govern over education in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. There were very contrasting responses to this question by several respondents who selected 0% (no support) to those who selected 100% (full support). Responses averaged to 62% support. Respondents offered the following final comments:

- *No task force (is) needed at Six Nations; no attempt should be made to take over education.*
- *My comments are based on my experience as a principal in a federal school up to 2010; not sure if things have changed since then*
- *I am very disappointed in this survey; the questions asked could not elicit the responses sought. Federal elementary, Private elementary should be questioned separately. Private secondary and Provincial secondary need to be questioned separately. K to graduation is not clear. Graduation meaning graduation from a school or graduation with a Grade 12 diploma?*
- *I feel this push by Six Nations Elected Council to create a Six Nations School board violates the 8 points of jurisdiction set out by Confederacy Chiefs and agreed upon by the Elected system in the 1990s when Bill Montour was elected band “chief” (on video); if any governing body is to be looking into the election system it should be Confederacy Chiefs, therefore, I am not in support and best leave Six Nations education to the feds as treaties states!*

Additional Data:

In 1990-1991 community research was conducted by several committees in Six Nations to identify the terms for negotiating an education agreement with the federal government. The writers of a summary report on the legal issues related to education law concluded that Six Nations would be prepared to enter into negotiations, assuming there was cooperation between the Confederacy Council and the Elected Council at Six Nations and additional research was undertaken. The matters of highest concern at that time were how a Six Nations education law would interact with federal and provincial laws and the powers, duties and legal character of the education authority. Additional research was deemed necessary regarding the development of education law, operational policies, signatories, and the ratification process (Community Education Project Steering Committee, 1991).

A position paper written by the Chiefs of the Confederacy (1991) expressed a willingness on their part to work with the community to craft “rafters” to support a self-government model; the paper also clarified that the Confederacy Chiefs did not see their role as the intermediary between the community and the federal government. Instead, the Confederacy Chiefs stated

¹ Federal schools are administered by a Director of Education now, not a Superintendent
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they should be granted exclusive jurisdiction in a number of areas. (Education was not included in this list.) The Confederacy Chiefs stated in this position paper, “We do not see a marriage of Confederacy Council and Band Council as the mechanism to create a better future for our people.” It is unknown if this position has changed since 1991.

In 2001 an education researcher concluded that Six Nations is missing two of the most significant elements of an education system; namely, school board governance and a senior administrative person to coordinate education (Bomberry Corporation, 2001).

A researcher reported in 2016 that Six Nations was still in agreement on the goal of assuming local control of education and developing an education law, but it had yet to come to any resolution (Martin, 2016). In spite of decades of research and extensive consultations throughout the community, the community remains conflicted on several issues related to education governance, legislation, and administration (Martin, 2016).

As of 2017, there were 515 federally funded First Nation schools across the country – most of which are elementary schools operating as either the sole school or one of just a handful of elementary schools in the community (Canadian School Boards’ Association, 2017). Of the 7 First Nations schools in Canada that are still directly administered by the federal government, 5 are in Six Nations (Ontario Ministry of Education and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2007).

These five federally funded elementary schools do not have a community-based governing body in place to set school goals, policies, or program requirements reflective of the community’s values and culture. Boards of Directors act in this capacity in Skaronhyase’ko:wa Everlasting Tree School and Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, whereas the STEAM Academy is governed by the Six Nations Polytechnic Board of Directors. However, there are no common education goals, policies or program requirements to unite all the schools in Six Nations.

There is no community-based governing body in place to establish either the academic or linguistic standards students are to achieve in Jamieson School, I.L. Thomas School, Emily C. General School, J.C. Hill School, and O/M. Smith School. The boards of directors seek to perform this function in the other schools, but they operate independently of each other. There is no community-wide school board or education authority in place to set education standards for the whole community and hold schools accountable for their performance. Further, there is no common education law, or act, to specify what schools are required to accomplish.

All schools receive federal education funding, but federal funding is at a lower level than provincial funding. None of the schools receive adequate funding. Financial shortages were identified as 1 of the top 5 issues impacting school climate in 2001, according to federal school teachers (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). VanEvery-Albert (2012) recommended that the elected band council ensure that a) education funds received meet the *real* needs of Six Nations students in all areas of their education experience, b) long term funding be guaranteed, and c) education funds not be less than the funding that would be received from the Province.

Bomberry Corporation (2001) reported that the federal government allocation budget per student (\$4,708.11) was much lower than the provincial average (\$7,172) and recommended that if Six Nations were to assume administration of schools, it should allocate a minimum of

\$6,512 per student. In 2018, a comprehensive education system was estimated to cost Six Nations \$401 million (Deloitte, 2018).

Outstanding Questions:

1. Has adequate research been conducted to inform the community on education law, operational policies, signatories, and the ratification process?
2. What aspects of an education law could all the schools agree upon (i.e. even if not all schools intend to join an education authority?)
3. Is there adequate cooperation between the Confederacy Council and the Elected Band Council at Six Nations to enter into negotiations with the federal government on education?
4. Do the Confederacy Chiefs envision having an active role in a new education system?
5. Would the community support honoraria for the trustees (or governors) of the education authority?
6. Does the community want to develop a system that ultimately achieves student outcomes comparable to provincial schools (i.e., in order that students can continue their education off reserve without academic penalty)?
7. Have the assumptions made in the Deloitte Education Study (2018) and Education System Roadmap (2019) been resolved so as to define the amount of education funding required?
8. Has the community reached an agreement on the federal government's obligation to fund education in Six Nations?

Leadership

Survey Data:

The Education Leadership Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education leadership services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education leadership services in the community.

School administrators were identified as responsible for establishing the education mission, vision, values, and goals in five federal schools (Jamieson School; I.L. Thomas School; Emily C. General School; J.C. Hill School; and O.M. Smith School), whereas in Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, parents, community members and Hodiyanehsoh perform this role, based on Hodinohso:ni beliefs.² One respondent commented:

- *The school administrators work together to form the Principals' Advisory Committee (PAC). The Superintendent of Education is usually the chair. This group should develop the mission, vision, and values but I believe it's left up to the individual schools. I'm not aware of any community mission, vision and values. It's top down from INAC to Superintendent to Principal.*

² It is not clear but is assumed that these terms are alternate spellings for "Haudenosaunee"
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School administrators were also identified as responsible for developing a multi-year education strategy to achieve common goals in the federal schools. Respondents commented:

- *The Principals' Advisory Committee along with the Superintendent would develop this multi-year educational strategy. I used to gather input from staff, parents and students but I don't know if every school principal did this. Then I would take this input to the PAC meeting.*
- *We work collectively (at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School) as one unit with families, agencies and elder supports when needed.*

A board of directors ensures effective stewardship of the budget and resources at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School whereas this role is performed by school administrators in the federal schools. One respondent commented:

- *INAC follows their funding formula to give the numbers to the Superintendent who then provides this information to the Principals at PAC. Funding is never enough to meet the needs of every school. As a principal, I had to prioritize needs based on input from all stakeholders. The Capital A budget which looked after building infrastructure, furnishings, technology etc. was managed by Six Nations Council. Schools were given individual budgets based on enrollment. The majority of the responsibility for budget management was put onto principals.*

The federal government hires and reviews the performance of the Director of Education for the federal schools whereas this role is performed by the board of directors at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School. One respondent commented:

- *INAC does all of the hiring for this position. Directors have often been non-resident. To me this means that they don't have first-hand knowledge of our community. They have predominantly been drawn from the hierarchy of INAC with offices in Toronto. Community members don't really have a say as to who is chosen. Not sure who reviews the performance of the Director. Could be the Minister responsible for education in Ottawa.*

The board of directors also develops and maintains an organizational structure that promotes education goals at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, whereas the federal government performs this role in the federal schools. One respondent commented:

- *PAC does this for the (federal) schools. There is no overall group that unites all the various entities. Every group does their own thing. There may be some collaboration but not much. The ordinary person may also not be aware of the function of each group.*

In Six Nations, school administrators form Home and School Committees at Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School and in the federal schools (under the direction of INAC). One respondent commented:

- *(Home and School Committee) Meetings are usually attended by the Principal, Vice Principal and parents. Staff are encouraged to make it a goal to attend meetings but it cannot be mandatory. Parents fill the position of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. To my knowledge, there is no consistency in how efficient Home and Schools are run. In the past, some of these meetings have become confrontational. Often issues are brought up that are*

not appropriate for this forum such as personnel issues. Provincial guidelines are not followed here.

School administrators are responsible for establishing a Special Education Committee at the federal schools. Respondents commented:

- *PAC along with the Superintendent does this. I think this committee should be made up of trained teachers, interested parents, as well as professionals within the community. Not enough support for Special Education is available now due to lack of sufficient funding.*
- *K/G has its own Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) person*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education leadership services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. Respondents were equally divided on this question ranging from full support (100%) to no support whatsoever (0%). Respondents offered the following final comments:

- *To my knowledge, there is no overall group that unites all of the various educational endeavours in our community. I would be in favour of a school board that would oversee education on Six Nations. Right now, there is limited connection.*
- *K/G is a self sustaining school with like minded people! The school operates with its own School Board and all supportive staff plus parent and student involvements. I feel the division within six nations by cultural practices, and world views will hinder centralized control unless the same focus and outlook is achieved. Thus far this has not been capable due to the mass historical trauma our community has faced, and much awakening needs to happen yet!*

Additional Data:

In 2001, an education researcher conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the federal schools in Six Nations, concluding that Six Nation does not have a formal elementary education system. One of the reasons given for this is that the band council and federal government represent two separate jurisdictions, in addition to the fact that each federal school is essentially site-based and operating under its own mission statement and objectives (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). Currently, there is a Director of Education for the federal schools only.

There is no direct communication link between the elected band council and education as a whole. There is neither an official Education Portfolio holder nor a community-based school trustee to liaise with school administrators, the band council, and parents. There is a Six Nations School Trustee for education in the Grand Erie District School Board only yet numerous students attend secondary school in the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board as well.

There is no community-wide organization in Six Nations to represent the shared education interests of parents. In the provincial system, each school board must establish a Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) that includes the Director of Education and elected school board trustees (one or more). The majority of committee members must be parents of students from different schools. The PIC focuses on issues that affect more than one school. The PIC is responsible for communicating with and supporting school councils; providing information and

advice on parent engagement to the school board; and organizing activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school.

There is no community-wide organization in Six Nations to represent the shared interests of Special Education students and parents. In the provincial system, each school board must establish a Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) that includes 1 trustee and 1 alternate; up to 2 First Nations representatives (where there are First Nations representatives on the school authority); 2 members at large; 1 representative and 1 alternate from each of 2 local associations (that are affiliated with organizations that further the interests and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults and do not represent professional educators); and 2 alternates (who are not members of the board) if there are no local associations. The SEAC is responsible for making recommendations to the school board regarding the establishment, development and delivery of Special Education programs and services for exceptional students; participating in the annual review of the school board's Special Education Plan; participating in the school board's annual budget process as it relates to Special Education; and reviewing the financial statements of the school board as they relate to Special Education.

The Bomberry Corporation report clearly stated that band councilors and Public Works both supported the idea of local control of elementary education, governed by a community-elected Board of Trustees, assuming funding was appropriate and the federal government was not relieved of its treaty responsibilities (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). Bomberry Corporation (2001) recommended the establishment of an interim Six Nations education authority, by means of a Memorandum of Understanding with the elected band council. Bomberry Corporation (2001) recommended that this arm's length organization be granted authority to administer services to early learning, elementary education, secondary education, and provide select administrative services to adult education programs such as language and culture, and employment training.

This suggestion to create an education authority or school board is not a new one. In 1986 an education researcher reported that Six Nations recognized the need for the federal government to fund a new education system, but the community had yet to determine how the system should be administered, or by whom (Longboat, 1986).

Longboat (1986) found that the community was concerned about how the school board would develop operational policies for a) equal representation of all community members, b) community accountability to lifelong learners, c) financial and administrative responsibilities, and d) teacher and staff hiring, supervision and compensation (Longboat, 1986). The band council recognized at that time that an education authority could promote school improvement planning and create opportunities for parents and families to participate in education issues in a constructive way and on a regular basis rather than just react to problems.

Longboat (1986) concluded that the community was in agreement that a new education authority needed to be established and that it could operate on the same basis as the Six Nations School Board did in the past (for more than sixty years) without becoming involved in political issues, so long as it represented the community as a whole and had appropriate training and funding. This body was to have responsibility for financial planning, curriculum development, and bussing, and would require two-year terms (elected or appointed).

A lot of ground work has already been undertaken to set the foundation for an education authority in Six Nations. A Community Education Project was launched in 1988 to facilitate community consultations on a comprehensive education plan (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). The Community Education Project produced a draft education constitution and policies for a Six Nations Education Board, in addition to a draft education organization chart (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). These documents are but a few of the significant achievements of long ago developed in preparation for government negotiations.

A report conducted by Hobbs in 1991 reportedly also came to the same conclusion about establishing an education authority.³ Subsequent community research in 2012 further reiterated the need for a trained education governance body to steward the funding and resources of an education authority in Six Nations (VanEvery-Albert, 2012). VanEvery (2012) identified the urgent need for the elected band council to begin negotiations with the federal government to take over education in Six Nations. Six Nations' education reports have consistently emphasized over the last several decades the importance of establishing an education authority and separating education governance from the community's political leadership. Six Nations' past experience in school board administration is historic and not lost on education researchers.

Yet another education researcher outlined considerations for an education authority in Six Nations. In 2016, Martin reported that this new education authority should be recognized as an education authority by the federal government but not be a school board under any other jurisdiction, provincial law, or Ministry. Martin (2016) stated that the education authority would require a clear constitution and bylaws for internal structure and operation as well as the authority to enter into contracts/agreements. The education authority should not be incorporated under provincial or federal law, or linked to any religious organization, but it should be insured for all members and employees for personal liability (Martin, 2016).

In 2018, Deloitte consulted with the Six Nations Lifelong Learning Task Force on the development of a target operating model for a new education system. In this circular shaped model, the Life Long Learner is in the centre and is surrounded, or supported, by Learning Environments (such as the land, plus all the schools in the community, Six Nations Polytechnic, Grand Erie funded institutes, GREAT, and OSTTC); Teaching and Learning (such as staffing, performance management and evaluation, teaching, staff training, professional development, research and development, and alternative programs, including professional development); and Student Success (such as extracurricular, classroom support, and student support). These three elements are surrounded, or supported, by the Education Coordination Unit. The report reads, "The Education Coordination Unit will perform the enabling functions that are required in order to successfully deliver the needs of the Life Long Learner." (Deloitte, 2018).

Further, in this target operating model, the Education Coordination Unit is to be responsible for education organization and governance (i.e., finance, quality assurance, stakeholder engagement, structure, policies and procedures), in addition to infrastructure (i.e., transportation, operations, maintenance, and technology). Language, Culture (including history), Haudenosaunee Values, and Curriculum appear in the outer ring of the circle to sustain the entire education system.

³ The Principal Investigator was unable to obtain a copy of the Hobbs report.
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Deloitte calculated costs for structuring and equipping the ECU with the means necessary to function as an education authority to oversee administration, finance, payroll, purchasing, academics, human resources, information technology, and mental health. The ECU would require a staff of 20 and a team of centrally coordinated support staff and paraprofessionals (e.g., psychologists, social workers, curriculum developers, lawyers, supply teachers, etc.) to be deployed across the ecosystem. It was assumed that 12 individuals would be compensated to act as governors.

The ECU acts as the central coordination organization and as an intermediary between government and the schools and organizations within the Six Nations of the Grand River education ecosystem. The ECU is a channel to coordinate, share, and integrate improvements across the system. (Deloitte, 2018).

At present, the Education Coordination Office has a staff of four (Education Manager, Policy and Research Analyst, Finance Analyst, and Administrative Coordinator) and reports to the Corporate and Emergency Services Committee under Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council (SNGREC).

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support the establishment of an education authority to oversee all elementary and secondary education in the community (including the private schools), assuming this organization was independent of the elected band council and had its own governing body? If not, would the community's position on an education authority be any different if each school had the choice to be administered by the education authority, either in whole or in part?
2. Does the community agree on prioritizing elementary and secondary education services (first area of focus) in the new education system?
3. Has the ECO been mandated to act as the education authority as recommended in the Deloitte Education Study in 2018? If not, would the community support a Memorandum of Understanding with the ECO to become the education authority?
4. Would the community see value in the education authority providing both second and third level services?
5. Which existing organizations in the community could be restructured to provide specialized second level services to schools under contract with the education authority?
6. Which second level services could Six Nations schools access via contracts arranged by the education authority with neighbouring organizations?
7. Which second level services could Six Nations schools access via partnerships or contracts arranged by the education authority with neighbouring First Nations or other Haudenosaunee First Nations?
8. Would the community support the return of an Education Portfolio Holder?

Supervision and Student Achievement

Survey Data:

The Education Supervision and Student Achievement Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education supervision and student achievement services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education supervision and student achievement services in the community.

The federal government⁴ was identified as responsible for routinely visiting schools and liaising with school principals in federal schools (Jamieson School; I.L. Thomas School; Emily C. General School; J.C. Hill School; and O/M. Smith School).

Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The Superintendent and Director of Education sometimes visit the (federal) schools. Perhaps various HR personnel from Toronto Office at times for different things.⁵ With perhaps the exception of the Superintendent, visits are few and far between. To my knowledge, schools are rarely visited by Six Nations Elected Council members and any visits would depend on geographical location on reserve. Personnel from Health Services and Social Services may attend to do presentations etc. Police may still do PALS program. Various Elders may visit some schools to provide language and culture. Not sure how it is now, but there was a definite lack of service from speech therapists, psychologists, and educational assessment personnel.*
- *This is a poorly worded question and can mislead the respondents. You should have identified, visits to the Federal elementary schools for what purpose? The sentence, visits all schools, is also not accurate as the Language schools, the Federal schools and STEAM Academy are not operating under one umbrella. Occasionally, Federal government employees inspect the facility, the Federal Director of Education oversees the funding, provides guidance and direction of the teaching curriculum, assessment and reporting, & health and safety, and supervises the Principals, among many other responsibilities. Under the Director's guidance, curriculum lead teachers assist the teaching staff and help to build capacity. Six Nations Health Services visits the schools to participate in mini teaching sessions for the students and orientation day of new Kindergarten students; Six Nations public Works manages the daily operations and maintenance budget, and the maintenance/janitorial staff in each of the 5 Federal schools, and are in the schools on a daily basis. STEAM Academy operates under the SNP Board, STEAM Academy Steering Committee, the Director of STEAM Academy, and the STEAM Academy Principal. The Academy is only 3 years old, as it grows, additional roles and responsibilities are identified and staffed. STEAM Academy operates under the SNP policies and guidelines. Additional policies are currently being written to address secondary school applications. I hope that this and other questions are clarified in order to gain better responses before this data is used.*

⁴ It is assumed this refers to the Director of Education

⁵ It is assumed this refers to human resources personnel from Indigenous Services Canada

The federal government also works with all the federal school principals on school improvement plans; school administrators are responsible for developing the school improvement plan at the STEAM Academy. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The Director of Federal Schools works with the 5 Federal elementary schools on school improvement plans. She provides direction and the Principals develop a plan following her guidance.*
- *School Improvement Plans have tended to be a top down process with direction coming from INAC down to the Principal. Content seemed to flow from what the Province was doing and did not entirely reflect the needs and wants of our community. Speaking for myself as principal, I relied on feedback from Parent/ Teacher/Student surveys that were done annually. The Home and School was also involved. Not sure if all the schools followed the same process. I also called it a School Success Plan rather than a School Improvement Plan. It was a document that was fluid as content could change as new needs were identified and others had been met. In my experience, there never was really any consultation with either the Elected Council or the Confederacy.*

In terms of supervising school operations (and their teaching programs), respondents offered the following comments:

- *This is another awkward question. Ultimately, the Federal Director is responsible for supervising the Federal schools only. There is not one entity who supervises all the schools as asked in your question. Under the guidance of the Director, the Federal school Principals are responsible for ensuring that the prescribed curriculum (Ministry of Ontario), is being properly and effectively implemented. Schools with strong leadership have traditionally performed better. STEAM Academy is guided by the Board, Steering Committee, Director and Principal.*
- *The Principal is responsible for the management of everything that happens at the (federal) school. Specific duties such as school discipline may be delegated to the Vice Principal but ultimately everything falls on the shoulders of the principal. In my experience, support from higher management was hard to come by. Six Nations needs to have its own school board, a director/superintendent who lives and resides in our territory and is knowledgeable of our language and culture. Competency of school administrators can vary from school to school depending on years of experience.*

Federal schools are held accountable for student achievement by the federal government. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *INAC tells school administrators what curriculum to use and what assessment and reporting tools to employ. Parent/Community members have very little to say about how this is done. This is mainly because they haven't been included in the process. Six Nations needs to have an entity that is responsible for monitoring student achievement. As well, we should develop some of our own assessment tools based on our values and culture. EQAO should be abandoned.*
- *There is no single entity for ALL of the schools at this time. It's too bad that this information was not provided to the consultant prior to the formulation of this survey. Ultimately, the Federal Government is responsible for the Federal schools however their input is limited and basically is provided through the Director of Federal Schools. Each Federal Principal is responsible for their schools, as are the teachers. The community also holds the schools accountable. Yes there are gaps in the service for Federal elementary schools. Six Nations*

Polytechnic Board, Steering Committee, Director, Principal and the teachers hold STEAM Academy responsible for student achievement.

School administrators at the federal schools handle parent concerns, inclusive of student suspensions and expulsions. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The responsibility for suspension lies with the school principal. Expulsions would probably involve the Superintendent and Director as well. The principal and vice principal handle all parent concerns although teachers are encouraged to initially work with parents to try and resolve the issue first. There is not enough support for administrators at times when dealing with parent issues. Because we are a close knit community, family and political dynamics often come into play.*
- *Once again, there is no single entity that handles parental concerns for ALL of the schools. Each licensed Administrator in the Federal system is held to the regulations under the Education Act (borrowed from the Ministry of Ed), and is responsible for maintaining order and discipline in the school. Each Principal should develop a code of student behaviour (sometimes done with the parents), and each school employee is responsible for ensuring that the code is properly implemented. Each of the Federal schools should be following the Hodinohso'ni values as part of their code of student behaviour. The Ministry of Education has also regulated the use of progressive discipline which all of the Federal Administrators should be using. STEAM Academy also follows the regulations as set out in the Education Act, re: order and discipline in the school, as well as progressive discipline and restorative justice. It's really too bad that respondents can only highlight one box per answer because in most cases, multiple entities share in the responsibilities as listed in these questions.*

Six Nations schools are not represented on regional education committees. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *To my knowledge, this is rarely done. If it has been done, one of the school principals has sometimes been appointed this duty by the Superintendent. Six Nations needs to have a seat on all of these regional committees. Whoever does attend, must then report back to the community as a whole.*
- *No single entity represents ALL of the schools in the community on any regional education committee. The closest person to this might be the Director of Education for Federal schools only. STEAM Academy is represented by Six Nations Polytechnic on any regional committees. This question needs rewording in order to elicit accurate responses that are geared to specific topics.*

School building operations, conditions (including unsanitary conditions), and equipment performance is supervised by school administrators in the federal schools. Respondents offered the following comments:

- *The principal along with the School Maintenance Director and the school janitors are responsible for all of this. Much of the work has to be done during the summer hours. Capital A budgets for each school have a direct bearing on what can be done. Timely access to support can sometimes be a problem. Some schools may also have a more active Health and Safety Committee than others. There is no consistency. INAC used to come down only in June with all kinds of personnel to do an annual inspection.*
- *As a principal, I reported any unsanitary school property to my school janitors who then may also have contacted the School Maintenance Supervisor if needed. I don't recall ever*

calling a Medical Officer of Health on my own. When I didn't get a satisfactory response from my supervisor re: frost boils in the early 2000's, I may have contacted Health Canada to look into the smell due to parental concern. There needs to be more involvement of trained professionals in this area.

- No one single entity supervises ALL of the Six Nations school facilities, equipment, operations. Six Nations Public Works manages this role for the Federal Schools only. I cannot speak for the private language schools. STEAM Academy at the Brantford Campus is a rented facility. The Facilities/Finance Director manages the daily operations, and contracts out for services when needed. I am sure that the Facilities Manager works in conjunction with the owner for major repairs and replacements. Snow removal and lawn cutting is the responsibility of the owner. The general maintenance is taken care of by 2 maintenance staff, whereas the cleaning is contracted to an outside business. This is a specific question that requires specific answers - please speak to Public Works for the Federal Schools and the Manager of the Facilities for STEAM Academy.*
- I believe that anyone can report (unsanitary conditions) to the Environmental Health Officer in Brantford. He is generally involved in the annual school inspection. The Federal schools have not had a direct reporting relationship with the Medical Officer of Health. Six Nations Public Health reports to the Medical Officer of Health but has not had to do this on behalf of the Federal Schools, to the best of my knowledge. There are in place, Federal monthly school inspections that take place. Reports are made monthly to ISC in Toronto. Any deficiencies and the monthly report are given to the school maintenance supervisor.*

There is no reporting of any acts or omissions by any schools in Six Nations that could violate, or has violated, the Education Act or any of the applicable policies, guidelines or regulations. Respondents offered the following comments:

- To my knowledge there is no person or group that currently does this. And to whom would they report it? To the federal government?*
- The Federal Schools do not have a reporting relationship with the province re; education act or any other regulation. The Federal schools closely follow the Education Act but they are not "officially held to its contents". Where there has been no policy in place federally, the Federal schools have followed the provincial regulations as a guideline. Anyone with legitimate cause can report their concerns to the Ontario College of Teachers regarding teaching staff. If there are concerns, the Director of Federal Schools generally receives the complaints or concerns. This question needs clarification. I do not know about the process used in the private language schools.*

There is no enforcement of the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding supervision and student achievement (inclusive of the student attendance provisions of the Education Act). Respondents offered the following comments:

- As mentioned previously, the Federal schools do not have a reporting relationship with the province so there is no penalty or reward for following the Education Act to the "T". They have unofficially adopted and follow some of the regulations and practices, such as in assessment, reporting, discipline, and some others, but only as a practice, not a rule or regulation. The Director of Federal Schools and the Federal Principals attempt to ensure compliance of the adopted guidelines. The STEAM Academy Director and Principal ensure compliance for the secondary school program.*
- I suppose it would be the Superintendent of Federal Schools through the Principal's Advisory Committee. But then, this person would be directed by someone in Toronto and*

Ottawa. Ultimately, the responsibility falls on the school principal. Therefore, adherence could vary from school to school.

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education supervision and student achievement services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. Both respondents were supportive of this idea, averaging 88%. Respondents offered the following final comments:

- *My comments are based on my experience in the schools up to 2016.*
- *Unfortunately, this survey was not worded well in order to gain the desired data. There was an assumption that ALL Six Nations schools are overseen or under the direct supervision of one entity, and this is not accurate. Questions in this survey do not allow for selecting multiple responses which is generally the case in any school system. The Federal relationship with federal schools is much different that the relationship between the province, the Boards of Education and the individual schools. There is no Regional Education Office at ISC, limited second level services (just the funding in some cases), so schools on reserve, are often left to their own devices, or borrow best practices and training from neighbouring school boards. In recent years, the Director of Federal Schools has worked with the Principals to create positive changes in the Federal Schools, but this has not always been the case. The current Director is an educator, and that makes a huge difference for what happens in the schools. Previously, this wasn't the case, and Federal Schools was only one of 3-4 portfolios that the previous Directors held. Six Nations Polytechnic STEAM Academy is in their third year of operation and is functioning well but there is always room for improvement as they grow. I think that if this survey was refined with specific and purposeful questions, that good data might be received.*

Additional Data:

In the public education system, supervisory officers and other staff specialists carry out supervision and student achievement (or student success) functions in school boards. Academic Supervisory Officers are Superintendents accountable to the Director of Education and must hold both supervisory officer and teacher qualifications. They support and supervise school principals. Business Supervisory Officers are also Superintendents accountable to the Director of Education but require business supervisory officer qualifications only. They typically have a background in accounting but also supervise building operations and maintenance staff.

Bomberry Corporation (2001) identified the absence of a Superintendent and additional supervisory officers (including Superintendents or Directors of Personnel, Finance, etc.) as serious gaps in Six Nations. There is a Director of Education in Six Nations now for the federal schools. There are no program evaluators on staff in any schools to conduct thorough evaluations. The last school evaluation was conducted in 2001 and it involved the federal schools only.

In 2012, VanEvery-Albert recommended that an arms-length, community-driven, fully funded entity should be created by the elected band council to conduct a school evaluation similar to the one done in 2001.

Further, there is no objective third party coordinating standardized testing or evaluating student achievement in literacy and numeracy or language education. It is unknown if comprehensive evaluations have ever been conducted on the private language immersion schools or the STEAM Academy.

In a Six Nations language study conducted in 2017, Green reported that none of the elementary schools in Six Nations have a standard tool in place to use for assessing the Haudenosaunee speaking proficiency of their learners.

Outstanding Questions:

1. If the community is not in agreement on the use of EQAO, would it support the development of new, culturally appropriate assessment tools for literacy and numeracy?
2. Would the community support the development of a Haudenosaunee language proficiency tool for educators to use to evaluate students' progress?
3. Which existing organization in the community could be restructured to provide assessment tools and standardized testing?

Finance

Survey Data:

The Education Finance Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education finance services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education finance services in the community.

The federal government sets an annual, balanced budget for the federal schools including provisions for hiring teachers (and other education staff), building and maintaining schools, and purchasing school supplies. The sole respondent commented:

- *INAC sets all budgets which was based on nominal roll in the past. Budget is formulaic and does not reflect the needs of the schools. There was no community or administrative input into what the budget was. Budgets were always far below the standards for provincial schools. Budgets should be sufficient to cover all the needs of the school.*
- *INAC determines budget for all of the above. Again, the number of educational staff you have is based on nominal roll. In my experience, schools never had the complement of staff that would best meet the needs of all students. Schools are sorely lacking in trained teacher aides that can provide one on one support for special needs or high risk kids. Restrictions are often placed on what money can be used for. Principals are expected to manage these budgets often without specific financial training.*

The decision to build new schools or close schools is shared among education stakeholders. The respondent commented:

- *In the past, it's been the parents and other community members who have held protests and closed the schools when needed. The boycott of 1989 comes to mind when parents closed*

the asbestos filled schools. This led to the building of the current schools. Federal staff have always been muzzled by INAC and told that they can't speak against their employer. So the only alternative was to have the parents speak out. The community needs to have more say about the construction or closing of a school. There needs to be an oversight body of some kind.

Program coordination (such as Special Education and before- and after-school programs) is performed by school administrators at the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *The PAC (Principals Advisory Committee) does this along with the appropriate community group. I don't think parents have much say in these programs.*

School finances and Home and School Committee finances are managed by school administrators in the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *Budgets are handed down by INAC to the principal. Capital A budgets for school furnishings and repair are coordinated with a finance person at Six Nations Elected Council. This person used to keep the accounting of all monies spent and required a year end report from the principal. Home and School funds were managed by the H&S treasurer. The principal decided who would receive professional development \$ based on a teacher's goals and the needs of the school's success plan. Very rarely was there enough money to give every staff member the professional development they asked for. There never was enough money to provide for all the special education needs of the students. Waiting lists were long and had to be prioritized by the school principal.*

Education Services Agreements (ESAs), which may include implementing the Reciprocal Education Approach, are negotiated by the federal government for the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge this kind of negotiation was done by the Director of Education with other personnel from the Toronto office. As a principal I was never asked for my thoughts. I have never heard of the Reciprocal Education Approach.*

School administrators at the federal schools coordinate fundraising. The respondent commented:

- *PAC has this responsibility. In all my years as a principal, I never had training in proposal writing.*

The federal government enforces the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding finance. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge it would be the Superintendent under the direction of the Director. But ultimately, again it is the principal.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education finance services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The sole respondent was 100% supportive of this idea and commented:

- *Once again my comments are based on my past experiences. Hopefully, things have improved over the years. As a principal, I had a lot of responsibility that at times may have taken my time away from the students.*

Additional Data:

Federal school funding flows from Headquarters to the federal schools. The Director of Education collaborates with principals to allocated funds. There is no governing body to oversee this process in the federal schools; as long as the schools are directly administered by the federal government, all spending has to be approved by Finance and the Regional Director General in the federal government. Vote 1 expenses go through rigorous government checks, which is a thorough but time-consuming process whereas Vote 10 expenses can be approved within the community. Federal school spending would be much more nimble and agile if more expenses were categorized by the elected band council as Vote 10 expenses rather than Vote 1 expenses. For example, to buy computer platforms as Vote 1 expenses could take as much as six months for government approvals whereas if they were designated Vote 10 expenses then they could be purchased within a couple of weeks and even purchased for a lower price from other suppliers. For another example, if this change in financing was applied to supply teaching, it would also enable principals to hire supply teachers without restricting them to working only 90 days a year. Over the long term, this would enable many more supply teachers to gain much more classroom experience and ultimately help qualify them for long term employment in Six Nations. Six Nations could make this change in financing and it would apply to all federal schools. (Tyendinaga made this change already.)

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support providing school principals with some financial authority, if they were trained, assuming there was an education authority in charge of finance overall?
2. How much financial authority would the community be willing to grant to school councils (Home and School Committees), assuming there was an education authority in charge of finance overall?
3. Would the principals be willing to undertake training in order to write funding proposals?
4. Would the community support accessing funding from sources other than the federal government (e.g., corporations, non-profit organizations, private foundations)?
5. Which existing organization in the community could be restructured to provide fundraising services or training in fundraising/proposal writing to principals?

Operations and Information Technology

Survey Data:

The Education Operations and Information Technology Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education operations and information technology services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary

providers of second level education operations and information technology services in the community.

The sole respondent was unsure who, if anyone, ensures all school buildings (classrooms, washrooms, lockers and changerooms) are maintained according to the standards set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation. The sole respondent commented:

- *I have things that need to be fixed in my classroom. Don't know who to request maintenance from. Our greenhouse is not currently functional.*

The federal government builds, furnishes, and equips the federal schools. The respondent commented that “a functioning library” is lacking.

“Ken Loft and his team” were identified as the primary manager of the physical assets of the federal school buildings and properties. The respondent commented that “a dedicated library” space is lacking.

It is unknown who, if anyone, enforces a disability access policy in Six Nations schools.

It is unknown who, if anyone, trains and manages school bus drivers in Six Nations. The respondent commented:

- *Cleaning staff need to be more thorough (especially in the light of Covid-19) and available throughout the day (i.e. when kids vomit) - provide cleaning supplies to teachers if custodians are not available*

It is unknown who, if anyone, coordinates building and vehicle repair scheduling with trades workers in schools and education buildings (inclusive of electricians, plumbers, mechanics, gas fitters, and HVAC technicians). The respondent commented that there is “poor ventilation in classrooms.”

It is unknown who, if anyone, develops a technology plan to guide, support, and direct the use of technology in schools for the 21st century. The respondent commented:

- *Insufficient training/orientation provided for new technology - the filter on our Internet is not operating, putting children at risk when using technology - looking forward to an iPad for each student - Don't understand how to get the board approved apps*

It is unknown who, if anyone, standardizes information technology services (inclusive of installations and maintenance, data security, and Help Desk support for staff and students, in addition to training school staff to maintain equipment). The respondent identified the lack of tech support as a gap:

- *receiving IT support in a timely manner (i.e. MyKey... have been waiting all year)*

It is unknown who, if anyone, provides technical support for education staff on a shared Learning Management System (LMS) or other Student Information System (SIS). The respondent commented:

- *We teach ourselves for the most part*

It is unknown who, if anyone, ensures schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding operations and information technology.

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education operations and information technology services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The respondent was 80% supportive of this idea and commented:

- *Not sure why I was being asked who is responsible for delivering various services. This is information I don't know. :)*

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support the construction of a library that the entire community could share?
2. Would the community support assuming control of construction of new school facilities?
3. Is there any organization in the community that could be contracted to construct school facilities?
4. Would the community support purchasing privately owned school facilities?
5. Which existing organizations in the community could be restructured to provide schools with technology services?

Human Resources

Survey Data:

The Education Human Resources Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education human resources services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education human resources services in the community.

The federal government coordinates staff recruitment, hiring, and employee contracting for the federal schools. The sole respondent commented:

- *All job descriptions and qualifications done by HR in Toronto. One of the elementary school principals is appointed to be the lead. This person along with any other principals that want to sit on the hiring board do the screening after Toronto advertises the positions. This hiring board which may or may not include the Superintendent prepares the questions and evaluation criteria usually drawing from past competition questions. I believe a parent sits on the actual hiring board when interviews are done. This was usually one of the Home and School Chairs. Very little input is sought from parents or community members as to the evaluation criteria and/or qualifications. Competitions are not restricted to just FN candidates which may lead to a non-native teaching in our schools.*
- *HR in the Toronto Office of INAC does this (hiring) all. Parents and community members really have no say as to who is working in the schools. We need to have control of our own hiring procedures based on Haudenosaunee culture and values.*

- *HR in Toronto does all of this (contracting). Again, there is no parent or community participation.*

School administrators verify teacher performance in the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *School principals are required to provide annual performance evaluations of all staff. As a principal, I conducted two informal classroom visits with a more formal year end classroom visit. There was regular communication with all staff as to completion of personal goals etc. However, this may not have been the consistent practice of all principals.*

The federal government maintains a human resource database of federal school employees. The respondent commented:

- *This is all done by HR in Toronto. There is no community input or access to this database.*

The federal government investigates complaints made against any federal school employees, and makes decisions about their discipline. The respondent commented:

- *The principal does any initial investigation but the Superintendent and Director are the main persons who take over afterwards. Usually an outside source is hired to conduct any further investigation if needed. Historically, parents and Home and School have become at times too confrontational in bringing forth any complaints or issues. Teachers may not be as supported by INAC as they could be. This is an area that definitely needs to be worked on for Six Nations. Sometimes there are familial ties that come into play which is not good. INAC tends to bow down to parental pressure even if it is not warranted.*

School administrators coordinate New Teacher Orientation and succession planning in the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge, the principal does this at their own school. There is no district procedure (for New Teacher Orientation). I think this is an important area to consider by perhaps developing a committee to orientate new teachers especially since many are non-native.*
- *The principal does all the succession planning. Brantford office used to provide updated supply teacher list. To my knowledge there is no mentoring by retired teachers and principals. Recognition and use of retired teachers and principals is an asset that has not been accessed at Six Nations.*

School administrators ensure the federal schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act and any other applicable legislation, regarding Human Resources. The respondent commented:

- *The principals do this. It means that we had a lot of reading to do.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education human resources services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The sole respondent was 100% supportive of this idea and commented:

- *Centralizing control over some or all of Human Resources is a good idea. This would help to alleviate some of the burden placed on principals.*

Additional Data:

Educator salaries are not on par with provincial standards, which is reported to contribute to challenges in attracting and retaining qualified staff.

An education researcher reported in 2017 that Six Nations struggles to find and maintain an adequate number of qualified Haudenosaunee language teachers (Green, 2017).

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support the development of a pay scale for educators, based on qualifications, that matches provincial salaries?
2. Would the community support the development of a new staff orientation program that includes cultural awareness training?
3. Which existing organization in the community could be restructured to provide the cultural training?
4. Would the community support the use of a Haudenosaunee speaker proficiency tool as part of teacher recruitment and performance evaluations?
5. Would the community support the idea of allowing staff to transfer from one school to another?

Business and Legal Services

Survey Data:

The Education Business and Legal Services Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education business and legal services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education business and legal services in the community.

Codes of Conduct (inclusive of ethical behavior practices for students, teachers, volunteers, other school staff, and parents) are developed by school administrators in the federal schools. The sole respondent commented:

- *Codes of Conduct are developed by the Principals of each school based on provincial guidelines and their school's particular needs.*

Federal schools are subject to the policies and guidelines developed by the federal government. The respondent commented:

- *This is a top down process from Toronto office to Director to Superintendent to Principal. The Mission, Vision and Goals may be developed by the school community including all*

stakeholders such as staff, parents and students. There is no consistent practice across the school district.

It is unknown who, if anyone, creates templates for writing procedures (inclusive of templates for schools to use to comply with education policies). The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge there are no such templates.*

School administrators in the federal schools revise school policies, guidelines, and procedures, in accordance with changes to the Education Act, and any other applicable legislation. The respondent commented:

- *School administrators (revise policies) under the direction of Superintendent/ Director. Perhaps the District Teacher would do this if there was someone in these positions.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, monitors the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation in schools. The respondent commented:

- *The Principal's Advisory and perhaps the District Teachers do this. There is usually not much follow-up with regards to evaluation of effectiveness.*

Federal school capital projects (inclusive of long range planning for school facilities, construction project identification, cost forecasting, construction project management, and risk management) are coordinated by a number of individuals. The respondent commented:

- *Public Works and the School Maintenance Supervisor do this. There may be some discussion with the school principal.*

Purchasing (inclusive of competitive procurement and group buying for assets of any kind, goods and services) is coordinated for the federal schools by the federal government. The respondent commented:

- *There used to be a person in the INAC office in Brantford who had this responsibility. I think this person now works out of an office at JCH.*

The federal government coordinates legal services for the federal schools. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge, this would be the Director of Education and Toronto office.*

The federal government ensures federal schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding business and legal services. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge this is done by someone from Toronto office.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education business and legal services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of

elementary and secondary education. The respondent was 100% supportive of this idea and commented:

- *There needs to be consistency across all schools. Someone with knowledge of the community as well as business and finance would be best.*

Additional Data:

Schools in Six Nations are currently funded from a variety of sources which impacts their program requirements and access to second level services. There are multiple second level services being provided to schools in Six Nations from a variety of sources under individual, informal service agreements. As individual organizations, schools are small in size and lack group purchasing power.

Federal schools now have a staff person to develop policies. The recent development of policies in these schools started with research on two boards of education as models. Six Nations education policies in the federal schools align with the Ontario Education Act. Federal school principals and Home and School Committees collaborate to support policy development.

Bomberry Corporation (2001) reported long lists of inadequacies in each school building, and this report included a School Facilities Audit conducted by a third party building consultant which found that three of the federal schools were experiencing problems as a direct result of inadequate project management by Six Nations Council.

An education researcher recommended in 2016 that if Six Nations were to assume local control of education administration, that it pursues ownership of all education buildings in the community (Martin, 2016). There was hesitation to assume control of building construction.

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support the idea of an education authority handling project management of schools?

Program Evaluation, Research, and Professional Development

About this Survey:

The Program Evaluation, Research and Professional Development Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education program evaluation, research, and professional development services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education program evaluation, research and professional development services in the community.

Monitoring and tracking education programs (inclusive of measuring program and service outcomes against goals) is done by school administrators in the federal schools. The sole respondent commented:

- *The District Teacher in the appropriate program along with the school principal (would do this). Each school may not have the same programs. There is not much consistency.*

Federal school administrators also evaluate student achievement results to inform the development of standards and policies (inclusive of reviewing and analyzing student achievement data, standardized testing data, and attendance data). Federal school administrators also collect, analyze, and report on student data to inform targeted strategies for increasing student achievement and success. The respondent commented:

- *The school principals along with the District Teacher for each subject area would do this.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, engages parents and/or other local organizations and communities to explore opportunities for reciprocal data sharing to support a shared understanding of students' demographics, successes, and challenges. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge this has not been done on Six Nations to any great degree. There is a lack of communication*

It is unknown who, if anyone, shares tools and techniques to help educators make evidence-based decisions. The respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge, this has not been done. Perhaps somewhat by the District Teachers.*

Teachers share reports on research subjects relevant to schools. The respondent commented:

- *The District Teachers would sometimes do this and present findings to the PAC (Principals' Advisory Council).*

Federal school administrators encourage Professional Learning Communities in schools to share best practices. The respondent commented:

- *Use of Professional Learning Communities depends on the extent to which principals buy into this pedagogy. There is no consistency.*

Training and professional development is coordinated in federal schools by school administrators. The respondent commented:

- *Principals determine who gets professional development based on the needs of the School Success Plan and the teacher's individual goals. There is never enough money to fund everyone who wishes to take training. Oftentimes, cost needs to be paid by employees and then they are reimbursed. This can be a financial burden*

The federal government ensures federal schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding program evaluation, research, and professional development. The respondent commented:

- *Director to Superintendent to Principal.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all education program evaluation, research and professional development services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The sole respondent was 100% supportive of this idea and commented:

- *Centralizing control over an area such as professional development would be good so that the needs of the whole SN Community could be met and not just those of individual schools. There should be more focus on Language and Culture as well as Music, Art, and Dance.*

Additional Data:

Individual schools are not equipped to conduct much program evaluation or education research; however, Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP) identifies research as central to its mission to preserve, apply and create knowledge specific to Ogwehoweh languages and culture, stating that its “two-road” epistemology applies in research and teaching (Six Nations Polytechnic, 2018). The Indigenous Knowledge Centre preserves and nurtures Indigenous knowledge and wisdom and fosters community-based research that incorporates Indigenous knowledge in all fields (Six Nations Polytechnic, 2020). To that end, SNP hosted an Indigenous Research Symposium in 2017 to explore themes on language, land and art (Six Nations Polytechnic, 2018). SNP has a “Two Row Research Partnership” and ran a “cultural fluency” series of workshops with lectures on theoretical and practical applications of Haudenosaunee-Indigenous Knowledge that was videorecorded and posted to the Indigenous Knowledge Centre website (Six Nations Polytechnic, 2018; SNP 2020) to serve as teaching resources. SNP has participated in joint research projects with universities in the past.

Only one language program in the community has ever used an internationally recognized proficiency assessment tool to gauge learner achievement and success in Mohawk (Green, 2018); this suggests the need to research the potential for adapting tools (either the CEFR or the ACTFL created by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) to an Indigenous context in Six Nations, as Green recommended (Green, 2018).

Outstanding Questions:

1. Would the community support the idea of developing a partnership or restructuring the Indigenous Knowledge Centre to conduct education research on behalf of the education authority?
2. Would the schools be agreeable to regular program evaluation?
3. Would schools be receptive to participating in research?
4. Would SNP be equipped to provide space for professional development on a regular basis?

Curriculum and Learning Resource Development

Survey Data:

The Curriculum and Learning Resources Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary education curriculum and learning resource services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level education curriculum and learning resources services in the community.

School administrators coordinate curriculum for programs in Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School whereas district teachers⁶ do this at the federal schools. The respondents offered the following comments:

- *There are no funds allocated or resources available. Everlasting Tree is developing our curriculum as we go.*
- *The District Teachers would do this for their respective areas which were usually Math, Reading and perhaps Science.*

The federal government approves school purchases of textbooks and learning materials for use in the federal schools, and school administrators are responsible for doing this in Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School. The respondents offered the following comments:

- *Each school has a budget based on the Nominal Roll. INAC would give direction as to what textbooks would be used in the schools. There was very little native content in any of these textbooks. The principal would also make these decisions based on input from Lead Teachers.*
- *There are no Haudenosaunee specific curriculums available and must be created.*

Teachers are responsible for developing and coordinating learning resources (in all grades and subject areas) at the federal schools. School administrators do this at Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School. The respondents offered the following comments:

- *To my knowledge, the District Teachers do this if there are these positions in existence (in federal schools).*
- *Each teacher creates own (at ETS). Lack of funding, as we are creating our own, we need to consult at times but there are few people available.*

School administrators are also responsible for coordinating library resources, inclusive of school or classroom borrowing kits, maps, books, videos, etc., in the federal schools and at Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School. One respondent commented:

- *There is no coordination (at the federal schools) unless it is done by the District Literacy Teacher. This falls mainly to the principal.*

⁶ It is unknown if there are still “district teachers” in place in federal schools
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There is no coaching of teaching staff on learning technologies (inclusive of computer applications and smart board technology) at Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School or the federal schools. The respondents offered the following comments:

- *The District Tech Teacher would do this (at the federal schools). If not, someone who is tech savvy at the individual schools*
- *There needs to be more technology support available. One or two people used to service all of the (federal) schools which led to delays.⁷*
- *We use less technology (at ETS), however there is no funding so teachers support each other*

There is no enforcement of the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, or any other applicable legislation, regarding curriculum and learning resources at Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School. The respondents offered the following comments:

- *We are a sovereign school (at ETS)*
- *Direction comes top down from Toronto to Superintendent to Principal (at the federal schools)*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all curriculum and learning resource services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. Respondents were divided on this question; one respondent was 30% supportive, but the other was 100% supportive.

Additional Data:

Curriculum is not standardized in schools in Six Nations. Bomberry Corporation reported in 2001 that 24% of school teachers had no curriculum to use, stating that teachers are left on their own to incorporate Six Nations history, language and culture into the Ontario curriculum and it varies, therefore, from class to class and school to school. The school evaluation report reads, "There is no standard written cultural content adopted and applied to the provincial curriculum." (Bomberry Corporation). Family Studies and Technology programs were also identified as lacking curriculum at that time (Bomberry Corporation, 2001).

Some schools use Ontario Native Second Language curriculum for content, instruction and assessment, whereas others use it for assessment only, as they require immersion curriculum so have had to create their own curriculum content (Green, 2018). Adult language immersion programs are also lacking curriculum, suggesting there is a need for beginning, intermediate, and advanced curriculum for all language educators to share in the community whether they are Native Second Language teachers or immersion teachers.

The Everlasting Tree School uses Waldorf Education curriculum adapted to Rotinonhson:hi values and teachings which align with a holistic approach to education.

The utilization of Waldorf curriculum supports the schools values and objectives. Unlike the standard Ontario curriculum, Waldorf curriculum supports the values of love, respect and

⁷ Chris Bomberry and George Georgopoulos currently oversee Information Technology in the Ontario Region, federal schools

peace, and as these values are also foundational Rotinonshon:ni values, the curriculum enhances the learning experience of students allowing them to now only learn Kanyen:keha but also live and practice Rotinonshon:ni culture, thus supporting holistic learning.
(Indspire, n.d.).

Bomberry Corporation (2001) reported that 2 out of 7 schools did not have an approved learning resources list to use to guide purchasing.

Individual schools are not equipped to create curriculum or search for culturally appropriate learning resources; however, other organizations have experience in this area. In 2012, Six Nations Polytechnic (Indigenous Knowledge Centre) worked with the Six Nations Legacy Consortium and experienced educators to develop culturally competent curriculum on the War of 1812. The Centre subsequently engaged in developing culturally competent science curriculum and produced audio and visual documents for a Grand River Mohawk dictionary with Richard Monture, an assistant professor of Indigenous Studies at McMaster University (Lewington, 2018). In 2018 the Centre released Mohawk Language App for Apple and Android devices in 2018, garnering over 14,800 downloads (Six Nations Polytechnic, 2018).

Outstanding Questions:

- Would teachers in schools and the adult learning immersion programs be willing to share all of the curriculum they have individually created, to be standardized for all schools to use?
- Would the community see opportunity to use Waldorf curriculum as the foundation for all future curriculum in the education authority?
- Would the schools support the idea of creating a shared curriculum and learning resource clearinghouse? (i.e., a library of resources for teachers in schools and immersion programs)
- Would the community agree to making language resources freely available to the entire community (e.g., online)?

Student Health and Well-Being

Survey Data:

The Student Health and Well-Being Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary student health and well-being services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level student health and well-being services in the community.

Federal school administrators adopt and revise policies, guidelines, and procedures in accordance with the Ontario Code of Conduct, the Safe Schools Act, the Education Act and all other applicable legislation, to promote safety and acceptance. The sole respondent commented:

- *The school principal is responsible for this. These topics are usually discussed at the Principals' Advisory Committee.*

Federal school administrators also adopt and revise policies, guidelines, and procedures in accordance with the Ontario Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, and any other applicable legislation. One respondent commented:

- *The Principals Advisory Council (PAC) does this perhaps in collaboration with Health Services.*

Federal school administrators enforce the Health and Safety expectations in the curriculum guidelines. One respondent commented:

- *The principal ensures that all expectations are met. Some schools use the Health and Safety Committee to assist.*

Federal school administrators implement programs through community-based health and social service agencies to enable early identification and referral, for treatment. One respondent commented:

- *The school principal along with support from the community agencies such as Public Health and Health Services does this. Oftentimes, parents don't always know what services they can access.*

Federal school administrators enhance mental health resources in schools. One respondent commented:

- *The principal is responsible for accessing any mental health resources. Each school used to have a Social Development Counselor who coordinated mental health programs in the schools. This position changed to an ECD person who worked only in the primary grades. Not sure if there is such a person in the schools now.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, coordinates supervised alternative learning programs for secondary students who have significant attendance difficulties at regular schools. One respondent commented:

- *Not sure who does this. I assume the Native Advisors have some of this responsibility.*

Federal school administrators work in collaboration with community partners to identify and address topics relevant to the health and well-being (including mental health) of students. One respondent commented:

- *The principal does this based on needs presented by staff and parents.*

Federal school administrators provide the necessary direction and leadership to ensure all elementary schools are provided with the staff, staff training, equipment, and facilities to implement Daily Physical Activity. One respondent commented:

- *The directive comes from the top down. From Director to Superintendent to the Principal on whom the burden rests. Principals work with individual teachers to ensure this is done to the best of the teacher's ability. To my knowledge there is never been any staff training on how*

to implement DPA. Practices are not consistent throughout the Six Nations Education District.

Teachers develop tools to monitor the implementation of Daily Physical Activity to ensure that every elementary school student benefits from opportunities to be physically active. One respondent commented:

- *The classroom teacher with the support of the principal and/or physical education teacher (if the school has one) develops these tools. Again there is no consistency across the school district.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, reviews and revises the Daily Physical Activity implementation plan for elementary schools on an annual basis, using stakeholder input. One respondent commented:

- *To my knowledge no one does this at this time.*

Federal school administrators identify resources and supports that will help improve the engagement, learning, success and well-being of all students. One respondent commented:

- *The school principal utilizes the various services and programs available in the community. This can also be done at School Team Meetings and/or IPRC's.*

Federal school administrators ensure schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding student health, safety, and well-being. One respondent commented:

- *The PAC does this under the Superintendent and Director. This is not always communicated to parents which can result in confrontation/parent protest etc.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all student health and well-being services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The sole respondent was 100 % supportive and commented:

- *Central control would alleviate some of the burden placed on school principals. It would also create hopefully, more consistent practices across the school district.*

Additional Data:

In the provincial education system, policy and procedure writing is performed by experts who are up-to-date on education legislation, education trends, and community demographics. Policy writers create tools to support school administrators with their task of implementing policies. Public school administrators are responsible for education tasks, not policy writing.

Unruly/problem behavior among students was identified as 1 of the top 5 issues impacting school climate in 2001– with 34 violent incidents and 40 suspensions in one year, according to educators (Bomberry Corporation, 2001). This report also stated that these events are not only disruptive but time-consuming to address, suggesting everyone would benefit from additional

preventative measures aimed at improving student well-being.

Six Nations Polytechnic reported in 2018 that there is a school nurse available to all Six Nations Polytechnic, STEAM Academy and Trades students who also provides health workshops on healthy nutrition and lifestyles.

Outstanding Questions:

1. Which existing organizations in the community could be restructured to coordinate organized sports and afterschool recreation for schools?
2. Which existing community organization could be restructured to provide a healthy meal program at schools?
3. Which health and social services do all schools need as a minimum, standard level of service?

Language and Cultural Education

Survey Data:

The Haudenosaunee Language and Cultural Education Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary Haudenosaunee language and cultural education services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level Haudenosaunee language and cultural education services in the community.

It is unclear who coordinates Haudenosaunee language instruction classes at the federal schools (to promote a basic command of the languages). One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *If there is a Second Language/Culture lead teacher, this person would work with (federal) school principals to provide resource and support. But basically, it's the principal who determines how the Language is taught. Quality of language instruction can vary from school to school. To my knowledge, there was no set curriculum for each grade level. This was something I tried to address as a principal.*

It is unclear who coordinates Haudenosaunee language instruction courses in secondary schools (to promote a functional command of the languages). One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *To my knowledge, Cayuga or Mohawk language instruction is virtually non-existent in secondary school. This is mainly due to the lack of qualified language teachers.*

It is unclear who coordinates Haudenosaunee language immersion education in elementary or secondary schools (to promote bilingualism). One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *Unless there is still a Language/Culture Lead Teacher than no one does this. At ILT (Cayuga) and OMSK (Mohawk), it falls on the principal to manage the Immersion program with the support and assistance of the parents and community members. There are several organizations that work with Language. Not sure if the Language Commission looks after all of the language programs on Six Nations. This in itself points to a lack of communication and/or coordination amongst all of the various language groups.*

It is unclear who ensures Haudenosaunee language instruction classes in elementary schools provide students with a balance of listening, speaking, reading and writing-based activities. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *To my knowledge, it was the school principal responsible for this. In my experience, there was too much emphasis on basic vocabulary, paper and colouring activities etc. I was trying to get my NSL teacher to work more on sentence construction and conversation/dialogue. Not all teachers were on board with this approach because language is supposed to be oral. Immersion teachers were sometimes reluctant to look for this balance.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, ensures Haudenosaunee language courses in secondary schools provide students with both student-directed activities as well as multi-disciplinary learning strategies in which language learning is related to other academic subjects, such as geography or music. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *To my knowledge no such service is delivered.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, ensure Haudenosaunee language courses in secondary schools meet the curriculum program requirements for the inclusion of special needs students, the local Indigenous community, technology, career education, and cooperative education. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *To my knowledge no such service exists.*

It is unknown who, if anyone, coordinates First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies courses in secondary schools in the community/school board to engage students in an interdisciplinary exploration of the histories, cultures, languages, traditions and perspectives of Indigenous peoples in Canada. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another commented:

- *To my knowledge, it's whatever exists in current curriculums.*

It is unclear which Haudenosaunee languages are coordinated in Six Nations schools. One respondent identified Cayuga as the language program being coordinated at O.M. Smith School whereas another identified Cayuga as being coordinated at Jamieson School, I.L. Thomas School, Emily C. General School, and J.C. Hill School only (with Mohawk coordinated at O.M. Smith School). Tuscarora was identified as the language program being coordinated at

Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School, Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, and the STEAM Academy.⁸ One respondent commented:

- *Both Mohawk and Cayuga languages should be available in all schools. Students should have a choice which language they learn. When students move schools for whatever reason, they sometimes are forced to start learning a new language. There are not enough certified language teachers who are able to work effectively with students.*

It is unclear who, if anyone, enforces the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies education. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another identified the school administrators, adding this comment:

- *The principal does this in the community along with support from any services available*

It is unclear who, if anyone, enforces the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding language education. One respondent identified the federal government as responsible for this service at O.M. Smith School whereas another identified the school administrators, adding this comment:

- *The principal is ultimately responsible for everything that happens in the school.*

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all Haudenosaunee language and cultural education services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. Both respondents were 100% supportive and commented:

- *Must ensure language is offered and respected. Without our languages we are no longer a distinct society.*
- *Central control would relieve some of the burden placed on school principals who unfortunately may not be language speakers themselves. There needs to be a consistent NSL and Immersion curriculum for language acquisition and implementation. There should be testing and evaluation methods and procedures in place. A barrier to this would be the reluctance of some Immersion teachers to give grades. This would have to be resolved some way. Ideally, there should be a collaboration of westernized and traditional methods of teaching and evaluation.*

Additional Data:

In 1986 an education researcher reported that teachers saw the need for their own ongoing cultural education and development, suggesting the community could be doing more to provide appropriate resources for them (Longboat, 1986).

In 2001, the Bomberry Corporation reported that there was a lack of consistency in cultural education that could be addressed through the development of a common cultural curriculum that all schools could use equally, suggesting language curriculum needs to be supplemented with culture curriculum.

⁸ KGPS offers both Mohawk and Cayuga, whereas ETS offers Mohawk only
Lifelong Learning – Second Level Services – Marlene Finn Wolfman Consulting

Researchers from Six Nations have determined that there are very few Haudenosaunee language speakers left living in the community, with estimates between 25-50 speakers still able to speak Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca, or Tuscarora (Onkwakara Communications & Consulting, Inc., 2018; Green, 2018). All of these languages are critically endangered. Further complicating the issues associated with endangered language revitalization is that Six Nations is attempting to revitalize three languages simultaneously (Onkwakara Communications & Consulting, Inc., 2018).

In 2016 a research study was conducted to determine how to create a critical mass of Ohkwehonwehnéha speakers in the community; this research concluded that immersion programming would be most effective, and a five-stage language acquisition model was developed as a framework; this could inform the development of a Haudenosaunee language proficiency tool in schools (Onkwakara Communications & Consulting, Inc., 2018).

Green (2017) reported that only 2 out of 20 language programs in Six Nations mention speaking proficiency in their mission statements or goals, and that language programs have yet to be updated to suit modern contexts. Modern language education balances reading, writing, and oral communication, and these skills are required in all Ontario language education curriculum guidelines.

One of the issues raised in the Language and Culture study by Onkwakara Communications & Consulting, Inc., (2018) is a perceived lack of identity among second language teachers in the school community. Second language teachers appear to lack the prominence and permanence of other teachers, implying Indigenous language education is not necessarily viewed (by teaching peers and potentially other community members as well) as having equal importance and value as other school subjects.

Six Nations Polytechnic is a member of the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council which is a group of Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk community members in Ontario and Quebec who united to collaborate on language revitalization (Woodland Cultural Centre, 2020). This organization could become a support for language educators.

Several language and culture research studies in Six Nations cited the absence of a central language facility to conduct research, create curriculum, design multimedia and other resources, and house adult immersion classes. In addition, community members in a 2018 study expressed interest in designing such a facility to provide common areas suitable for eating and gathering to promote language exchange and recreation, as no such facility currently exists in the community (Onkwakara Communications & Consulting, Inc., 2018).

Schools are not equipped to coordinate large language and cultural events; however, the graduates of the language program offered at Six Nations Polytechnic, are expected to assist in the documenting of languages (Six Nations Polytechnic 2020); this is a valuable human resource that could support language teachers to help coordinate language events in schools (and be included as part of the adult students' training programs). Adult immersion students could also prove valuable in this regard.

Outstanding Questions:

1. What is the language education goal in Six Nations? a) a basic command of the language, b) to become conversant, c) to become fluent, d) to become bilingual, e) to become mother tongue native speakers, or f) intergenerational transmission in heritage mother tongues?
2. Would the community support language education standards that include achievement levels in reading, writing, and oral communication?
3. Would SNP and the adult language immersion programs support the idea of engaging their language students in coordinating events in schools and across the community?
4. Would the community support the idea of including a requirement for students to complete a certain number of credits (secondary school) in a Haudenosaunee language as part of their graduation requirements?
5. Would the community be supportive of the development of Haudenosaunee culture curriculum?
6. Would either the Woodland Cultural Centre or the Six Nations Language Commission see themselves as having an active role in the new education authority?

Special Education

Survey Data:

The Special Education Survey sought to describe the current landscape and identify any potential gaps in elementary and secondary Special Education services in Six Nations. The survey inquired about the primary providers of second level Special Education services in the community.

The federal government was identified as responsible for developing a Special Education plan that outlines the general philosophy and service-delivery model for the federal schools. School administrators carry out this responsibility in Skaronhyase'ko:wa Everlasting Tree School, Kawenni:io/Gawenni:yo Private School, and the STEAM Academy.

Implementing detailed procedures for early and ongoing identification of children's learning needs is a responsibility of all of the school administrators.

Similarly, coordinating Special Education programs and services for all special needs students is a service provided by all of the school administrators.

Federal school administrators are responsible for establishing Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) and following specified processes in the identification and placement of special needs students at the federal schools.

Federal school administrators are responsible for providing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children identified as having special needs at the federal schools.

A Special Education District Lead creates, maintains, and reviews Special Education plans, and prepares annual reports on Special Education programs and services at the federal schools.

The Special Education District Lead also limits the enrolment of students with different types of special needs, or exceptionalities, in self-contained classes at the federal schools. The sole respondent commented:

- *Special Education District lead (does this) through District IPRC process*

Preparing and updating accessibility plans that address the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities is a shared responsibility in the federal schools. One respondent commented:

- *Special Education School Leads, District lead, school Principals, community Health*

It is unknown who, if anyone, provides a Section 23 program with care and/or treatment, custodial and correctional facilities.

It is unknown who ensures schools follow the rules set out in the Ontario Education Act, and any other applicable legislation, regarding Special Education.

The last question inquired about support for centralizing control over some or all Special Education services in Six Nations, if the community were to assume local control of elementary and secondary education. The sole respondent was 100% supportive.

Additional Data:

Federal schools follow the same process that public schools use for delivering Special Education, and these processes are outlined in numerous resource documents on the federal schools' website. Special Education services are complex and inevitably require collaboration among a variety of organizations, but individual educators in federal schools have to first navigate their way to learn about which services are available and how to access them, and this requires quite a bit of effort and time on their part, especially if they are not familiar with these services or do not know who to contact. There is no roadmap. Advocacy for the student is only as strong as the knowledge of the community connections present in each school.

If a student's special needs cannot be met in a federal school environment with the staff on site (Special Education Resource Teacher, Child and Youth Worker, and Youth and Life Promotion Worker), then additional resources need to be brought in to create a community circle of care. But for this to happen, there should be a liaison between schools and services in the community. Special Education services often involve Child and Youth Services, Health Services, Social Services, Indigenous Services Canada, Jordan's Principle, etc., but not all of these organizations are fully aware of others' services, so there are various choices to consider.

Federal schools have had a leader in Special Education for only two years, so these schools are playing "catch up." Their leader in Special Education has developed policies and procedures for staff and parents, and staff are just now becoming informed in Special Education. It is only recently that they have been encouraged to take Additional Qualifications courses in Special Education in faculties of education or elsewhere (such as the GEDSB) to learn more about autism, FAS, etc. Staff expertise is still limited. For many years, Special Education has been reactionary in the federal schools rather than progressive.

CONCLUSIONS

Comprehensive education systems have become the norm around the world in response to changes in the world economy, community health, the family unit, and social values. No longer are education systems considered acceptable if they do not adequately prepare students for success in their personal and professional lives. Despite all the differences between mainstream education systems and First Nations education systems, this is one point both can agree upon: the purpose of education is to provide students with the knowledge, skills and values they require for life, which really illustrates the need for education systems to plan for the future. Hence, the responsibility placed on educators today is nothing short of monumental.

Most First Nations education systems of late feature a centralized organization (school board, education authority, regional education management organization) or a small number of organizations working in collaboration in order to act as the conduit to government funding, education governance, and education coordination. Comprehensive First Nations education systems require extensive second and third level supports – even more than those provided in the provincial education system, notwithstanding additional education funding for these services. Education coordination yields processes and systems that greatly benefit education services in the classroom.

First Nations education systems in Canada may differ from one another in terms of their range of services, volume of schools and/or communities served, and organizational structures. They may also differ in terms of their education legislation and the level of authority they exert over schools. Similarly, while some education systems provide an all-or-nothing service plan for schools, others are more flexible in offering certain services upon request to individual schools.

At the same time, First Nations education systems typically share common governance, leadership and administration principles. Education governance and political leadership are unique roles that are generally separated from one another. Those charged with education governance generally have law-making, policy-making, and goal setting authority and they are usually elected to their positions. Those charged with education administration generally have service coordination and implementation authority, as they are specialists in their fields. These promising practices are informative to First Nations that have yet to establish their own comprehensive education systems.

Six Nations is currently facing a host of education challenges. Some of these are longstanding challenges whereas others are relatively recent and are directly related to the disjointed nature of second and third level service delivery in the community at present. Surveys clearly demonstrated that education data is lacking. Standards are lacking. Policies are lacking. School principals are preoccupied with duties that are best served by trained specialists. Resources are not being used as effectively and efficiently as possible. Schools are currently funded, governed, and administered by multiple providers with different expectations. Schools are working towards the achievement of different goals and using different resources, despite the collective desire to establish an education system to serve the entire community.

Consider these education funding, governance and legislation gaps in Six Nations:

- None of the schools in Six Nations receives adequate funding
- There is no community-based education organization in place to govern over education; set community-based education goals, policies and program requirements; establish community-based education standards (academic and linguistic); and develop community-based core curricula to guide schools
- There is no community-based education legislation to guide and protect school staff, students, or parents in Six Nations

Consider these education leadership gaps in Six Nations:

- There is no community-based education leader to establish school mission statements or values statements to guide schools
- There is no community-based education leader to develop a multi-year education strategy to guide school administrators in elementary and secondary schools
- There is no education leader to establish a community-based leadership group led by parents or parents of special needs children
- There is no education leader to represent Six Nations

Consider these education supervision, student achievement, and communication gaps in Six Nations:

- Schools, principals, and education programs are not regularly supervised and evaluated to produce informative data for decision-making
- There are no culturally-appropriate literacy, numeracy, and Haudenosaunee language proficiency assessment tools for educators to use in Six Nations to produce informative data for decision-making
- Communication is lacking between schools, Health Services, Social Services, Public Works, the Band Council, parents, and public school boards

Consider these education finance gaps in Six Nations:

- There are no consistent practices in place for education purchasing
- Education Services Agreements with public school boards are inadequate
- Six Nations' education resources are not being used as effectively or efficiently as possible

Consider these operations, information technology, business and legal gaps in Six Nations:

- Elementary and secondary students, teachers, and school administrators do not have equal access to clean, healthy, spacious school facilities; learning resources; or information technology
- School administrators are burdened by policy development

Consider these human resource, professional development, program evaluation, and research gaps in Six Nations:

- Schools struggle to attract and retain qualified staff

- Teachers do not have adequate access to Haudenosaunee cultural information
- Professional development is limited
- Education decisions are not evidence-based, as program evaluation data is lacking
- Educators do not have equal access to research on best practices

Consider these curriculum, learning resource, language and cultural education gaps in Six Nations:

- Students and teachers do not have equal access to appropriate learning resources and libraries
- Schools do not have equal access to appropriate curriculum in academic subjects, language education, or cultural education
- There are no community-based standards, goals, or assessment tools to guide Haudenosaunee language and cultural education that will meet students' current and future needs

Consider these student health, well-being, and Special Education gaps in Six Nations:

- Health and safety is inconsistent among schools
- There is no community-based Special Education strategy in place
- There are no formal second level service agreements/contracts in place for health and social services in schools in Six Nations
- Schools do not have equal access to information on Special Education resources
- Special needs children do not have equal access to Special Education services in Six Nations

In contrast, research has identified a number of opportunities in Six Nations:

- ❖ There is support for assuming local control of education in Six Nations, and the community has demonstrated this repeatedly over many decades of consultations
- ❖ There are many promising practices in First Nations comprehensive education system development for Six Nations to emulate
- ❖ Six Nations could collaborate with other First Nations experienced in developing comprehensive education systems
- ❖ Six Nations has already done a lot of groundwork necessary for a transition in education authority
- ❖ The community has many valuable, established businesses and organizations that could be coordinated (contracted, expanded, or restructured) to provide comprehensive second and third level services

Overall, research supports the establishment of a standalone body to govern over education in Six Nations; data also support centralization of second level services. It is clear that community-based education governance and coordination is long overdue in elementary and secondary education.

To meet current and future education needs, schools in Six Nations require access to coordinated services in a number of areas that include:

- Governance

- Leadership
- Supervision
- Student achievement
- Finance
- Operations
- Information technology
- Human resources
- Business
- Legal services
- Program evaluation
- Research
- Professional development
- Curriculum development
- Resource development
- Student health and well-being
- Language and cultural education
- Special Education, and
- Communication.

It is hoped that this research succeeds in providing Six Nations with creative examples (including Haudenosaunee examples) on how to tackle some of the obstacles associated with second and third level service delivery. It is hoped that readers will see there are many different ways of centralizing education services without compromising on Haudenosaunee values or language.

The Education Coordination Office will have opportunity to follow-up with the community on the outstanding questions in this report to fill in additional gaps in knowledge that are needed to inform recommendations for a new education system.

If the recommendations in this report are adopted and implemented, the Principal Investigator is confident that this generation of First Nations students in Six Nations will receive a much improved education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is challenging to develop recommendations in light of the complexities associated with establishing a comprehensive, community-based First Nations education system; however, Six Nations seeks to develop a lifelong, language- and culture-based education system that functions at a world-class level. Working from this premise, the Principal Investigator identified several second and third level education service gaps that need to be filled on a sustainable basis, with recommendations below on how to proceed.

It is recommended that the Education Coordination Office share the findings of this report with the Six Nations elected band council and community at large for feedback. Engagement will help to assess the community's positions relative to the second and third level service gaps identified in this research. This engagement will provide those individuals who were unable to participate in the surveys at that time with the opportunity to express their views; it will also enable the ECO to clarify any misunderstandings about the nature of this research project.

This may be an ideal opportunity to collect additional data pertinent to the design of a comprehensive education system. Refer to the Outstanding Questions that appear below each survey's results. This information will help to inform the education strategy that the ECO is currently developing and how to implement the recommendations below.

1. Establish a Six Nations Education Law

If the community assumes local control of education, it is recommended that both Elected Council and Confederacy Council use their law making capacities to establish an all-encompassing Six Nations Education Law. In general, the law should act as a companion to an education constitution and set out the process for community leadership to delegate authority for elementary and secondary education to an education authority.

The law should include guiding principles and definitions and address the critical elements of funding, education standards (in academics, computer literacy, language education, and school facilities), curriculum, and service administration, but also clarify the relationship between the Six Nations government and the education authority in addition to the education authority's relationship to participating elementary and secondary schools. The law should define the composition of the education authority as well as its powers and duties, accountability to the participating schools, and responsibility regarding finance, personnel, and policy making.

The community could explore the idea of amending the law at a later date to include provisions for early years programs, postsecondary education, adult language immersion centres, adult employment training centres, teacher education centres, and distance education centres, if desired.

An education law in Six Nations would go a long way towards promoting and enforcing consistent education standards, programs and services throughout the community. All participating schools would be subject to the same policies and regulations, which is crucial

when dealing with arising challenges and staving off potential problems. All schools would have equal access to funding and second level services. Education law would do more than expand community access to a high-quality education: education law provides for students' rights, teachers' rights, school safety, conduct, discipline, Special Education, and administration. Education law serves to protect students, staff, parents and other education stakeholders, such as trustees, or board members.

Refer to First Nation Education Law for First Nation Governments: A Template report.⁹

2. Obtain Funding

It is recommended that Six Nations elected band council and the ECO revisit the Education Study (2018) and Education System Transformation Roadmap (2019) developed by Deloitte for recommendations on the amount of education funding required.

It is recommended that Six Nations obtain long term funding from Indigenous Services Canada to build a comprehensive First Nations education system.

Refer to the ten-year funding picture and budgeted envelope components in the Deloitte reports above.

3. Establish a Governing Body and Education Authority

It is recommended that Six Nations establish the Education Coordination Office as an education authority (through the Six Nations education law) to administer second level services to all elementary and secondary schools. The community could research the potential for expanding the ECO at a later date to extend services appropriate for early years programs, postsecondary education, adult language immersion centres, adult employment training centres, teacher education centres, and distance education centres, if desired.

The governing body within the ECO, whether an elected board of trustees or other named governing body, would develop community-wide education goals and policies to support all elementary and secondary schools to achieve common education standards (including language education goals and standards). This governing body would recruit and evaluate the senior administrator whereas the senior administrator would recruit and evaluate the second level service specialists. Positions, or openings, on the governing body could be designed to represent different cultural values, or traditional roles. This elected body would provide oversight to ensure education resources are deployed effectively and efficiently through aggregation and collaboration in service provision and programming. These individuals would receive an honorarium.

An education authority in Six Nations would go a long way towards administering consistent education programs and services throughout the community. Centralized coordination serves

⁹ Kahontakwas Diane Longboat. (2013). First Nation Education Law for First Nation Governments: A Template. Ontario First Nation Education Counselling Association. Retrieved online July 6, 2020

<https://oneca.com/documents/forms/FINAL%20TEMPLATE%20FOR%20EDUCATION%20LAW.pdf>

to create equal opportunity for students, teachers, principals, and parents. All schools would have equal access to second level services.

The senior administrator would be responsible for developing a multi-year education strategy. Second level services would be coordinated by professional staff, reporting to the senior administrator, through a number of channels:

- Provided by the ECO directly
- Provided by other appointed organizations (within or beyond Six Nations) through formal service agreements established by the ECO, and
- Provided by local school boards through Education Service Agreements (with Six Nations or multiple First Nations including Six Nations) established by the ECO.

The ECO would be responsible for establishing appropriate community-wide committees to represent the interests of parents, including parents of exceptional (special needs) children.

Refer to the legal characteristics of an education authority recommended by the Community Education Project in the Six Nations Path to Educational Freedom report.

4. Authorize the Education Authority to provide Second Level Services

It is recommended that Six Nations authorize the education authority to establish an organizational structure that is both efficient and effective for coordinating the delivery of multiple second level services to all the elementary and secondary schools in Six Nations. It is recommended that this structure include specialists in:

a) Academics:

This person would lead the development of culturally competent assessment tools for evaluating students' literacy, numeracy, and Haudenosaunee language proficiency (reading, writing, and speaking). He/she would develop reporting mechanisms to collect and analyze attendance, literacy, numeracy, and other student achievement data to inform program evaluation on a regular basis. This individual would be responsible for evaluating schools and principals. He/she would liaise with school principals, help principals develop plans to reach community-wide education goals, conduct regular inspections, develop a tutoring program, and enforce academics provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

b) Finance:

This person would develop reporting mechanisms to collect and analyze financial data on a regular basis. This person would be responsible for budgeting, annual reporting, second level service contracting, and fundraising. He/she would negotiate a new Education Services Agreement with the Grand Erie District School Board that includes provisions for reciprocal data sharing, and establish an Education Services Agreements with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School that includes a First Nations school trustee). He/she would supervise and evaluate the performance of all finance staff and enforce finance provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

c) Operations:

This person would develop reporting mechanisms to collect and analyze building, property, transportation, and mechanical equipment data on a regular basis. This person would be responsible for inspecting, evaluating and maintaining the condition of all physical assets: school buses, buildings, properties, and playgrounds. He/she would also make recommendations for health and safety and capital planning. He/she would supervise and evaluate the performance of all janitorial staff, maintenance staff, bus drivers, and contracted trades workers, and enforce operations provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

d) Information Technology:

This person would develop reporting mechanisms to collect and analyze computer, phone, Internet, smartboard equipment, and Learning Management System data on a regular basis. This person would develop an information technology inventory and assume responsibility for inspecting, evaluating, and maintaining the condition of all school and education office technology; making recommendations for purchasing; securing education authority data; and training staff on the use of equipment (including teachers and school administrators). He/she would supervise and evaluate the performance of all information technology staff and enforce information technology provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

e) Human Resources:

This person would develop and maintain a human resource database, a health and safety program (for staff and students), a new staff orientation program (including cultural awareness training), and a mentoring program for principals. This person would develop job descriptions and employment contracts for every position in the education authority along with performance evaluation tools. School principals would make recommendations to this specialist for teacher hiring and professional development; principals would evaluate school staff. This specialist would coordinate professional development and supply teachers; supervise all human resources staff, and enforce human resource provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

f) Business and Legal:

This person would reconcile all of the schools' calendars, and policies and procedures (including Code of Conducts, Parent Handbooks, Student Handbooks, and Employee Handbooks) in conjunction with the specialist in human resources and contracted legal experts. This person would develop a multi-year capital planning strategy and be responsible for long range planning of education assets, identifying construction projects including new school buildings and libraries as required (cost forecasting and competitive procurement), and group buying for goods and services in schools. He/she would supervise and evaluate the performance of all business staff and contracted legal officials and enforce business and legal provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

g) Research:

This person would conduct research on education issues to inform pedagogy in schools, including emerging trends in First Nations education and best practices in culturally competent assessment of literacy, numeracy, and language proficiency. This person would develop research mechanisms to collect education program data on a regular basis and share findings with the appropriate specialists. He/she would share best practices in instructional methodologies and assessment strategies for literacy,

numeracy, and language education and develop a culturally-based Professional Learning Community in each school. He/she would develop research partnerships. He/she would supervise and evaluate the performance of all research staff and enforce research provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

h) Curriculum:

This person would develop curriculum and curriculum guidelines to fill gaps in schools, including in career education, and cooperative education. This person would support the development of language and culture curriculum and prepare a list of approved textbooks and learning materials, inclusive of language and culture resources. This person would develop a curriculum and learning resource inventory, coordinate standardized curriculum in schools, make recommendations for purchasing learning resources, and coach staff on the proper use of learning resources. He/she would also direct the stocking of resources for a library or other learning resource clearinghouse, supervise and evaluate the performance of curriculum developers, and enforce the curriculum provisions in Six Nations Education Law.

i) Wellness:

This person would develop a multi-year student well-being strategy, develop a nutrition program and a physical activity program for all grades, and develop culturally competent student well-being assessment tools for evaluating students' physical, mental, spiritual, and social condition. He/she would develop reporting mechanisms to enhance the education authority's academic data collection to inform program evaluation on a regular basis. He/she would coordinate mental health, social work, and career education professionals in schools; train staff, students and parents on the health and safety program; supervise school cooks; and enforce the wellness provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

j) Haudenosaunee Language and Culture:

This person would develop a multi-year Haudenosaunee language and culture strategy and lead the development of language and culture curriculum for second language programs as well as immersion programs. This person would coordinate elders, faithkeepers and other knowledge holders in schools, as well as adult language immersion program students in language and cultural events in schools and on the land to integrate language and culture across the curriculum and throughout the community. He/she would support the cultural awareness program for new employees and the development of a language proficiency assessment tool. He/she would coach Haudenosaunee language teachers and enforce the language and culture provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

k) Special Education:

This person would develop a multi-year Special Education strategy in conjunction with a Special Education committee and establish a Special Education program in every school, including education for gifted students and physically challenged students. This person would be responsible for developing Individual Education Plans for special needs children, curriculum modifications and accommodations, and a parent guide to Special Education. He/she would make recommendations for purchasing, coordinate and supervise contracted paraprofessionals and Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTS), evaluate SERTS, and enforce the Special Education provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

1) **Communications:**

This person would develop reporting mechanisms to collect and analyze education stakeholder communications data on a regular basis. This person would be responsible for messaging, internal communications, public relations, and social media, including training staff on the use of social media. He/she would develop a parent engagement strategy in conjunction with a parent committee (with roles inclusive of reading, tutoring, fundraising, sports coaching, cultural activities, and excursion chaperoning) and also enforce communications provisions in the Six Nations Education Law.

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