Circle of Light
2007 Conference

Achieving excellence for all students

A First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Conference
November 26–28, 2007 – Toronto Marriott Eaton Centre

Canada

Ontario
The conference organizers wish to extend their thanks to all of the speakers and presenters who are sharing their knowledge and expertise at the Circle of Light Conference. We also wish to thank the many volunteers who have worked so hard to make this event a reality.
Greetings from the Co-Chairs

We are very pleased to welcome you to Circle of Light — A First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Conference supported by the Ontario Ministry of Education, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

It is encouraging that so many of you are gathering from across Ontario, and other parts of Canada, to join us in sharing effective practices that support learning for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students.

The theme of the conference is Achieving Excellence for All Students. This reflects our commitment to student success, which includes improving achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. This also means increasing awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives, among all students in Ontario. These are priorities for both our governments.

It has been more than 25 years since Ontario hosted a large-scale conference focused on Aboriginal education. This event is a demonstration of our collective commitment to working together more closely with Aboriginal communities and organizations, education leaders and administrators. The conference represents a unique opportunity to learn from each other’s experiences and build on each other’s successes.

We are confident that the Circle of Light conference will give educators valuable insights and practical tools to help First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students be successful in school and beyond, while building on the existing momentum to focus more on the unique needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners in Ontario.

We wish all attendees a wonderful conference.

Sincerely,

Alayne Bigwin
Ontario Ministry of Education

Katherine Knott
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27
DINNER BANQUET

DR. CECIL KING, BEd, MEd, PhD, an Odawa, from Wikwemikong, has spent fifty years in education as a teacher, professor, researcher, consultant and teacher of teachers.

Dr. King founded the Indian Teacher Education Program, University of Saskatchewan, and was the first Director of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Queen’s University. He served as Head of the Indian and Northern Education Program, University of Saskatchewan and the Dean of the Saskatchewan Campus of the First Nations University of Canada.

His language is his first love. He has taught Ojibwe at the University of Saskatchewan, Stanford University and the University of Alberta. He has developed Ojibwe Language Programs in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Minnesota, Chicago and California and has produced an 8,000 word Ojibwe dictionary. He works with his daughter, playwright Alanis King, translating her plays into Ojibwe. He is currently translating materials into Ojibwe for the Toronto Zoo Turtle Island Conservation Initiative.

Dr. King has advised governments, Aboriginal organizations, provincial departments, heritage organizations, and universities. His areas of expertise are: Aboriginal Education, Aboriginal History, Ojibwe Language, Aboriginal Teacher Methodology, Policy and Administration of Aboriginal programs, Research Techniques with Aboriginal People, and Aboriginal Language Methodology.

Dr. King works with First Nations in developing First Nations-controlled programs and policies. He has worked with the Cree Education Authority at Moosonee, Kasibonika Lake First Nation and Manitoulin/ North Shore Education Authority designing community-based university programs. Currently, he is part of Saskatchewan’s Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee to the Minister of Learning.

Dr. King is Professor Emeritus, Queen’s University. He is the recipient of Queen Elizabeth’s Golden Jubilee Medal and the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28
12:30 PM

MARIA CAMPBELL, Métis writer, filmmaker and playwright, is best known for her first book *Halfbreed*, published in 1973. She has published seven other books, among them *The Book of Jessica and Stories of the Road Allowance People*. She has produced and directed numerous documentary films and videos and has written and directed plays for stage. Her first play *Jessica* received a Dora Mavor Award for Outstanding New Canadian Play and has toured nationally and internationally. Maria has been a volunteer, activist and advocate for Aboriginal rights and the rights of women and children for many years. She is retired from the University of Saskatchewan where she taught Aboriginal Literature, Drama and Native Studies for fifteen years. She has received numerous awards for her community and artistic work: the Gabriel Dumont Award for Merit by the Métis Nation, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award, and the Chief Crowfoot Award from University of Calgary for her contribution to the education of Aboriginal people. She holds three honorary doctorate degrees and has been inducted into the Saskatchewan Theatre Hall of Fame. Maria is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who loves to cook, quilt and hike. She lives at Gabriel’s Crossing, Batoche, Saskatchewan with her dog, the crows, eagles, deer, coyotes and turkey vultures.
Circle of Light 2007 Conference — Achieving excellence for all students

PLENARY SPEAKERS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27
10:00 AM

PAMELA TOULOUSE

DR. PAMELA ROSE TOULOUSE (BA – Lakehead, BEd – Nipissing, MEd – Brock, PhD – University of British Columbia) is a professor in the School of Education (English Concurrent Program) at Laurentian University. Originally from the community of Sagamok Anishnawbek, she is a proud Ojibwe/Odawa woman who comes from a long line of educators. She celebrates 15 years of activity in the formal educational setting, beginning as an elementary school teacher and then finding herself in the role of colleague within higher education. Dr. Toulouse is known for her contributions in the area of curriculum development, and was the lead writer for the Shki-Mawtch-Taw-Win-En-Mook (Path to New Beginnings) Project, a nationally acclaimed series that honours First Peoples and upholds critical education standards. Dr. Toulouse continues her life journey in the field of education by representing her Nation in a respectful and meaningful way.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28
3:00 PM

BEN LEVIN

DR. BEN LEVIN is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto.

Dr. Levin’s career has been in academia and in government. He is a native of Winnipeg who holds a BA (Honours) from the University of Manitoba, an MEd from Harvard University and a PhD from OISE/UT. His career in education extends over many years, starting with his efforts in secondary school to organize a city-wide secondary school students’ union and his election as a school trustee in Seven Oaks School Division at the age of 19. Since then he has worked with private research organizations, school divisions, provincial governments, and national and international agencies, as well as building an academic and research career in education.

Dr. Levin has held leadership positions in a wide variety of organizations in the public and non-profit sectors. From late 2004 until early 2007, he was Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario.

From 1999 through 2002, he was Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Deputy Minister of Education, Training and Youth for Manitoba. He is widely known for his work in education reform, education change, education policy and politics. His work has been international in scope, including projects in a dozen countries with several international agencies.
## CIRCLE OF LIGHT
Conference Schedule at a Glance

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00 – 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration and Reception</td>
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**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 – 8:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15 – 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome by Co-Chairs: Alayne Bigwin and Katherine Knott&lt;br&gt;Opening Prayer by Elder&lt;br&gt;Opening remarks by Chief Bryan LaForme, Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation&lt;br&gt;Opening remarks by the Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Student Panel Presentations – Perspectives on Student Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Aboriginal Students and Self-Esteem – Framework for Success in Lifelong Education&lt;br&gt;Dr. Pamela Toulouse, Professor, Laurentian University</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Networking Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Session B1*: Aboriginal Perspectives in the Curriculum Resource &lt;br&gt;Session B2*: Aboriginal Student Self-ID Data to Support Student Achievement &lt;br&gt;Session B3: Exploring First Nations Parent Knowledge &lt;br&gt;Session B4: Effective Instructional Strategies that Support the Learning Needs and Strengths of First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students with Special Education Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Banquet Dinner and Cultural Presentation&lt;br&gt;Keynote Speaker: Dr. Cecil King</td>
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| 8:15 – 9:00 a.m. | Welcome by Co-Chairs: Alayne Bigwin and Katherine Knott  
Opening prayer by Elder  
Opening remarks by Dominic Giroux, Assistant Deputy Minister and Deborah Richardson, Regional Director General |
| 9:00 – 9:45 a.m. | Student Panel Presentations – Perspectives on Student Success                          |
| 9:45 a.m.      | Break                                                                                   |
| 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. | Session C1  
Panel  
Experiences in Developing an Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policy  
Session C2  
Engaging Aboriginal Parents  
Session C3  
Character Development: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Teachings Connections  
Session C4  
Successful and Effective Applications of Communication Technologies in First Nation Classrooms  
Session C5  
NSL Curriculum Support and Program Alignment  
Session C6  
Parent and Community Engagement  
Session C7  
Affirming the Métis, Informing the Others: Métis Resources for the Secondary Classroom  
Session C8  
School Success  
Session C9  
Teaching and Learning for All: Successes and Lessons from Mine Centre (Effective Strategies Focusing on Oral Language Development)  
Session C10  
Shki Mawtch Taw-win En-mook  
Session C11  
Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Webcasts |
| 11:00 a.m.    | Break                                                                                   |
| 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | Session D1  
Panel  
School & Community Partnerships for Student Success  
Session D2*  
Engaging Aboriginal Parents  
Session D3  
The Métis Family Literacy Program  
Session D4  
Community Partnership and Language Camp Initiatives with Seven Generations  
Session D5  
Partnership Building with Aboriginal Communities  
Session D6  
School Success in Tyendinaga First Nation  
Session D7  
Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools – A Guide for Staff  
Session D8*  
School Success  
Session D9  
A Network of Care: Curve Lake First Nation  
Session D10  
School Success in Eabametoong  
Session D11*  
Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Webcasts |
| 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | Lunch — Keynote address — Maria Campbell: Author, Playwright, Broadcaster, Filmmaker and Elder |
| 1:45 – 2:45 p.m. | Session E1  
Urban Issues  
Session E2  
A Successful School – An Outstanding Native Language Program  
Session E3  
Oral Language: The Missing Link to Reading and Writing  
Session E4  
The Implementation of the Manitoba Aboriginal Education Action Plan  
Session E5*  
A Network of Care: Curve Lake First Nation  
Session E6  
Kwayaciiwin Resource Centre  
Session E7*  
School Success in Tyendinaga First Nation  
Session E8  
Effective Assessment and Evaluation Tools and Practices for Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students with Special Needs  
Session E9*  
Affirming the Métis, Informing the Others: Métis Resources for the Elementary Classroom  
Session E10  
Learning Mathematics for Teaching  
Session E11  
Empowering Aboriginal Youth through Strength-Based School Programs |
| 2:45 – 3:00 p.m. | Break                                                                                   |
| 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. | Wrap up – Next Steps: “What will you do differently next Monday?”  
Dr. Ben Levin, Professor and Canada Research Chair, OISE, University of Toronto |
| 4:15 p.m.     | Closing Prayer by Elder                                                                 |

* These sessions are repeat sessions.
The project began with a review of subjects of the revised Ontario Curriculum for elementary schools – Social Studies Grades 1–6, History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, and Language Arts, Grades 1–8 and for secondary schools – History, Geography, Economics, Law, Politics, Guidance and Career Education, Business Studies, and English. The review resulted in a list of expectations identified in each of the subjects that had an explicit or indirect reference to Aboriginal content in the subject. Twenty teachers, mostly Aboriginal, from across the province were hired for the month of July to develop teaching strategies, provide background information and list resources based on the identified expectations.

There are three distinct products being created that, taken together, form a resource library. The first product is the list of expectations that the writer-teachers worked from. The second product consists of two booklets, one for elementary teachers and the other for secondary teachers, which introduce teaching strategies by grade level and subject. The third product is a companion CD which contains detailed resources (detailed lesson plans, background information, associated resources and cross-curricular connections) and the first product mentioned.

Drawing from their research, Ted and Debbie differentiate between the concepts of parent involvement and parent engagement. While parent involvement continues to perpetuate the hierarchy in schools and asks parents to serve the school’s agenda, parent engagement speaks to a moral commitment between educators and parents and a relationship of respect and reciprocity. In this session, Ted and Debbie will describe processes and practices utilized by inner city school staffs in Saskatchewan to meaningfully engage parents and community. As they describe the experiences of both staff and parents, they will highlight practices that have successfully engaged parents, particularly First Nations and Métis parents.

The Queen’s University Aboriginal Teacher Education Program has been delivered in the Rainy River District Tribal Area for the past 10 years. Our graduates are found in provincial and First Nation schools at the elementary and secondary levels plus in leadership roles. Recruitment and retention strategies will be shared. Our regional education systems are very much a part of our success.

Leah Dorion will present on the University of Saskatchewan’s Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP).

The Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) was established in 1980. SUNTEP is a four-year, fully accredited Bachelor of Education program, offered by the
Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) in cooperation with Saskatchewan Learning, the University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Regina. This program is offered in three urban centres – Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon – and has been designed to meet the education needs of Métis students, as well as address the strong need for trained, qualified Métis educators.

A6 PRINTS Program (pre-JK) Karen Nakagee

PRINTS is an acronym for: Parents Role Interacting with Teacher Support. PRINTS is a literacy program that empowers parents, caregivers, and professionals alike to begin important literacy skills at home. This program invites parents/caregivers to engage in simple but very important activities at home with their child/children. Activities focus on children from the ages of 0-6 years. There are five areas which PRINTS focuses on: Books and Book Sharing; Oral Language; Play; Environmental Print; Scribbling, Drawing, and Writing.

A7 Panel – Native Counsellor Training Program Roxane Manitowabi, Cindy Fisher, Christine Migwans

Since its inception in 1977, the Native Counsellor Training Program has continued to be a highly effective training model for Aboriginal people pursuing a career in the counselling field. The program’s unique design allows students to earn a certificate from the Ontario Ministry of Education over the course of 3 summers. To date, 441 students have successfully completed and graduated from the program. Upon completion, students will be equipped with the skills required to perform in numerous work environments within Native Organizations, First Nation Communities, Federal/Provincial Health, Employment and Education Sectors.

A8 Literacy – Strategies at Work Robyn Welch

Teaching in Ontario is an exciting cultural adventure. Across the province, we work with children and families whose linguistic, cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds are diverse, and whose life experiences and orientations to learning may be very different from our own. To be effective in this environment, we need to bring together tools, resources and expertise to support student learning in literacy!

Do we know how to ensure success for every student? Primary-Junior teachers will learn about high-yield instructional strategies as a foundation for a comprehensive literacy program. Professional learning communities will be explored as a means to support teacher learning about challenging instructional issues in our diverse classrooms.

In this interactive presentation, participants will explore perspectives with colleagues from across Ontario through focused talk and activities.

A9 Woodland Cultural Centre’s Education Extension Program Bernadette Wabie

Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the Woodland Cultural Centre’s Education Extension Program. This program enables students and educators to learn about First Nations people and issues through various means including classroom presentations, mail/email correspondence, and recommended books/website resources. Educators will be given an overview of the types of education partnerships that have been developed through this program, such as G.E.M.Fest, the Six Nations Region Spelling Bee, and Arts Access. Discussion will revolve around how this program includes First Nations information in the curriculum and what types of First Nations resources educators could use in the classroom.

A10 Aboriginal Perspective in the Curriculum (French-Language Presentation) Irène Landry, Paulette Rozon

This workshop for Francophone elementary and secondary teachers will present pedagogical strategies to help them better integrate the history, culture and viewpoints of First Nations, Métis and Inuit into their teaching. The workshop will start with an overview of Ontario’s New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs published by the Ontario government in 2005, and focus on the numerous learning contents in the Ontario elementary and secondary curriculums that deal directly and indirectly with Aboriginal peoples. The workshop will introduce a range of teaching strategies that allow students to explore, appreciate and value the contribution of Aboriginal communities to the social and cultural life in Ontario and Canada, and thus help them to become aware of the wealth and diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture.

A11 Student Programming at Pikangikum First Nation Phil Starnes, Dean Peters

Our presentation is about school life in an isolated First Nation reserve. We will cover the culturally inclusive curriculum we have developed as well as our technology program.

We will touch upon our new school project, and how it has been designed to meet the needs of our community. We will also cover the various programs we have instituted to better reach the student in Pikangikum.
**Session B**

**B1 Aboriginal Perspectives in the Curriculum Resource**
Repeat session
Keith Lickers, Bryon Brisard

For description of this session, see page 6.

**B2 Aboriginal Student Self-ID Data to Support Student Achievement**
Repeat session
Dr. Cheryl Aman

For description of this session, see page 6.

**B3 Exploring First Nations Parent Knowledge**
Debbie Pushor

Intrigued to see that in the field of education there is a large body of literature on teacher knowledge, but no corresponding body of literature on parent knowledge, Debbie Pushor has been engaged in research to determine what parent knowledge is, and how it is held and used by parents.

In developing an understanding of parent knowledge, Debbie has spent a year in individual conversations with three parents, inquiring into their parent knowledge. In this session, she will share her research with a First Nations father and his family, demonstrating how his personal practical parent knowledge is evident through things such as temporal rhythms and cycles, images and metaphors, rules and practical principles, personal philosophy and narrative unities—all shaped by his identity, his culture, and his lived experiences. There will be an opportunity in the session to discuss how this rich parent knowledge could take a place alongside teachers’ knowledge in classrooms and schools and could enhance and inform decision-making processes regarding school policies, procedures and programs—contributing a perspective that enriches and extends the perspective of educators.

**B4 Effective Instructional Strategies that Support the Learning Needs and Strengths of First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students with Special Education Needs**
Dr. Jason Price

In this presentation and interactive moderated discussion, Dr. Price will critically analyze “special education” in First Nation, Métis and Inuit educational contexts. The presenter will advocate for the need for First Nation, Métis and Inuit educators to depart from mainstream paradigms informing “special education” practice and theory, and move towards contextualised and enriched educational approaches that stress cooperation, counselling-dialogic learning, peer mentorship, and service learning approaches. This presentation will stress the importance of respecting the values and approaches of traditional Indigenous pedagogies and that nothing is more practical than a good theory or foundational values of practice.

**B5 Aboriginal Infused Teacher Education Curriculum: Institutional and Programmatic Issues**
Dr. John Lundy, Dr. Cam Willett, Dr. Lara Doan

Laurentian University:

This presentation describes Laurentian University’s new (English Language) School of Education, a program infused with principles and practices of equity, with special focus on Aboriginal perspectives. We outline our university and school tri-cultural mandate, hiring practices, flat-structured organizational principles, and specific examples of our curriculum. Social reconstructionist infusion models of effecting change will be described, detailing various decolonizing strategies and specific ways that Aboriginal world views are infused into our five-year program. Details will be provided about generic teaching methods and courses taken in the mandatory professional year of our program that situate long and short-range lesson planning within an equity framework. Specific examples of how our curriculum courses (literacy, music, social studies) also follow this infusion model and our collaboration with the Shki Mawtch Taw-win En-mook Curriculum Project (www.thenewpath.ca) will help to contextualize our equity-based teacher education project.

Windsor University:

“The Beginning Time Teachings: Aboriginal/Original Cultural Training & Education Program”

Through oral teachings, discussion, guest speakers and a cultural camp experience, this program offers teacher candidates the opportunity to think through and learn from a variety of Original teachings and learning modalities. In this presentation, Dr. Doan will be describing the development of the Beginning Time Teachings Educational experience, which is an elective course offering for teaching candidates in the primary/junior division in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor.
Mount Carmel School was built in 1954 and is located in downtown Kenora. Consistent low EQAO scores generated assistance from the Turnaround Program from the Ministry of Education. Through the guidance of an expert teacher from the Turnaround Program, with teamwork and collaboration, the students and staff were transformed. Teaching students instead of programs enabled tremendous gains in test scores and parental involvement. Our school population has 92% aboriginal students, 8% other nationalities. Under the leadership of a dedicated principal, the staff rose to the challenge of living their beliefs that “all students can learn”. Today the school is closed and the students have amalgamated with others in a new building. The challenge is to ensure that the high performance of the Mt Carmel students continues to be sustained and the other students at the school are supported in their strive for high performance.

Karen will share with you how the Inuit families and children living in Ottawa have benefited by the relationship that the OICC has developed with the public school RE Wilson, located in a neighborhood that is home to a high number of Inuit Families. It has been a wonderful experience for the staff of the OICC to build a relationship with the Principal Marva Major and her staff. It is a relationship that is built on trust, one where the focus is on the Inuit children and families. Parents see that working together to enable the children to be successful learners also adds to the betterment of the community.

The Ontario Ministry of Education provides funding towards the Alternative Secondary School Program within Native Friendship Centres to support urban First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students at risk of leaving or who have left the education system. This program runs in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. The program supports activities such as cultural programs and counseling, as well as the use or engagement of resources such as Elders. Programs are located in London, Sudbury, Fort Erie, Fort Frances, Kenora, Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton, and Ottawa.

In this workshop, the Hamilton, N’Swakamok and Ne’Chee Friendship Centres will share their successes and experiences.

Come and celebrate several students and graduates, as they discuss their personal success stories on navigating the education system! Find out how their mentors, secondary school programs, postsecondary programs, communities, and working world experiences helped them overcome challenges and stay focused on graduation. Their energy and enthusiasm will inspire you!
Wednesday, November 28, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Session C

C1 Panel – Experiences in Developing an Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policy
Sharon Speir, Sylvia Terpstra, Gayle Stucke

This workshop is a panel discussion with Sharon Speir, Rainbow District School Board, Sylvia Terpstra, Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, and Gayle Stucke, Lambton Kent District School Board, regarding their experiences in developing voluntary, confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policies.

C2 Engaging Aboriginal Parents
Brent Tookenay, Heather Campbell

To increase the direct and active engagement of Aboriginal families in their children’s education, the Rainy River District School Board introduced two creative strategies: the Families Learning Together event and the Parent Outreach program. The Families Learning Together initiative provides workshops and resources for parents so that they can support their children’s learning. Its main focus is to make elementary schools inviting for all parents, and involve various Aboriginal community partners, presentations and resources. The Parent Outreach program has a secondary focus, and brings the school environment and curriculum to the various Aboriginal communities within the district. Both programs have been successful in forming partnerships with First Nation families, with Parent Outreach supporting the significant increase in the First Nation graduation rate. This presentation provides an overview of these strategies within the context of the Board’s strategic plan, an analysis of the indicators that led to the strategies’ implementation, and the data showing the success of the programs.

C3 Character Development: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Teachings Connections
Lorraine Gruzuk, Jan Kielven

There are strong connections between the beliefs and principles of character development and the teachings of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures. An explicit focus on these and other teachings promotes harmony and enhances relationships in our schools and communities. When students learn about, understand and respect the traditions and beliefs of others there are significant benefits for all members of communities.

The document Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K–12 outlines the context and expectations for Ontario’s Character Development Initiative which will be implemented in all publicly funded school boards and authorities during the 2007/08 school year. One of its key tenets is the honouring of Aboriginal and other local perspectives in the development of board and school plans. This interactive session reviews key messages and strategies that specifically connect character development and Aboriginal Teachings.

C4 Successful and Effective Applications of Communication Technologies in First Nation Classrooms
Brian Beaton

K-Net is a regional information technology and content development service of Keewaytinook Okimakanak (Northern Chiefs Council) organization. The K-Net program is working directly with First Nation schools and organizations across Ontario supporting the development and delivery of a variety of broadband services and developing electronic Indigenous applications. K-Net supports and manages various local First Nation telecom initiatives across the province. This presentation is an opportunity to share the organization’s experience sustaining local school and community networks, our efforts and actions identifying school needs, mobilizing schools, encouraging and supporting individual use of its IT services and applications. Brian Beaton will share observations and efforts to create a positive impact and environment for the use of these technologies in First Nation schools and of social interaction among peers. The session will highlight successful and effective uses of the communication technologies including the showcasing of existing online resources created with various online tools and resources that school teams can then return to their communities and begin using.

C5 NSL Curriculum Support and Program Alignment
Justine Copenance-Bell

This session will outline the implementation of Anishnaabemowin in the classroom focusing on the Ontario Ministry Guidelines for grades K–12 programming, as well as use of Seven Generations Education Institute 1985 teacher resource books.

The North Western dialect will be used to develop teaching tools, lessons, strategies and best practices in the development of Native as a second language/immersion programs.

C6 Parent and Community Engagement
Taunya Laslo

Schools are often challenged with engaging their parent population. Taunya will present how the Native Youth Advancement with Education (NYA; WEH) program is developing relationships with community partners, parents and caregivers of Aboriginal learners to support student success.
C7 Affirming the Métis, Informing the Others: Métis Resources for the Secondary Classroom
Karon Shmon

The inclusion of Métis content and perspectives in the curriculum affirms the history and culture of the Métis while giving all students a unique perspective through the eyes of the Métis. This session provides a Métis view on why this is needed as well as strategies and resources to meet this objective. An overview of Métis resources produced by the Gabriel Dumont Institute and how they enrich classroom learning will be shared. Saskatchewan Book Award-winning titles will be highlighted as well as extension activities for classroom use.

C8 School Success
Barry M. Montour

The Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education has seen many successes over the past several years with the Early Years Program, the Mohawk Language Immersion “Skahwatsira: Program” and the Saxon Math series. The current school improvement plan includes guided reading and running records, the CAT 3 writing prompts, inclusion practices and differentiated instruction. This presentation highlights many of the points presented in the “Sharing Our Success” review, as well as discussion of the issues facing intermediate level students as they transition to the provincial school system, and provides an insider’s view of the challenges of operating a school system given the unique geographic location of Akwesasne.

C9 Teaching and Learning for All: Successes and Lessons from Mine Centre (Effective Strategies Focusing on Oral Language Development)
Devona M. Crowe, Dorothy Nicholls

Mine Centre Elementary School and St. Patrick’s Separate School in Atikokan have served as demonstration sites for the school authority members of the Northern School Resource Alliance project: Teaching and Learning for All. Data gathered from the sites shows that resources and practices implemented have brought about positive achievement results for Aboriginal and special needs students and teacher professional growth.

During the first phase of the Teaching and Learning for All project, teachers observed a demonstration classroom with a focus on classroom organization that promoted independence in learning, inclusive teaching strategies and resources that supported the implementation of balanced literacy programming in the junior division. In the second phase, teachers honed their practice in offering oral language activities through balanced literacy programming and focusing on the learning styles of Aboriginal learners.

The rationale:
• strong oral language skills result in strong reading skills and,
• classroom learning activities that promote collaborative and cooperative learning will support the learning styles of special needs and Aboriginal children by allowing them to practise oral language skills.

C10 Shki Mawtch Taw-win En-mook
Stephanie Roy

The Shki Mawtch Taw-win En-mook project is a progressive initiative involving the partnership between Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation and the Rainbow District School Board to develop culturally inclusive curriculum from elementary to secondary school levels. The goal is to provide teachers, parents, and schools with a curriculum that includes and reflects Anishinaabe values, content and knowledge, so all our children, Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe, can learn about the people and the traditions of this land.

C11 Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Webcasts
Pauline Beder

The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat webcasts have been viewed by thousands of educators across Ontario. We continue to receive very positive feedback as to their use provincially.

Webcasts are available at www.curriculum.org in English and in French. Viewers are able to access video on demand, or order DVDs from Curriculum Services Canada. Webcasts are research based and make professional learning opportunities available on a need basis, regardless of the user’s geographic location or time constraints. They are ideal for individual, small group or large group learning. Topics are relevant and current and presented by practitioners and experts in education.

These sessions will explore a variety of webcasts now available.
**Think Inside the Circle**

An overview of Queen Elizabeth District High School in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, will focus on how and why the school continues to shift towards an inclusive, culturally responsive teaching and learning environment. A large proportion of students are Aboriginal or of Aboriginal ancestry and it is anticipated this number will continue to increase. In order to create a positive school experience for all students, the school has embedded creative courses, cultural activities, entire programs and an overall philosophical approach to school operations.

These programs include:

**Gigendaaso’ow-wido’win (AAEP)**

Gigendaaso’ow-wido’win/ The Aboriginal Alternative Education Program (AAEP) allow students, especially from northern communities, the ability to attain secondary school credits without pressures and timelines.

**LYNX Pathways**

The LYNX program is based on the Ministry of Education Pathways initiative. The program is rooted in Indigenous curriculum that focuses on community, language, land-based teachings and culture.

**STRIVE** is an adventure learning program that aims to help grade 8 students transition into secondary school more easily.

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**D2 Engaging Aboriginal Parents**

Repeat session

Brent Tookenay, Heather Campbell

For description of this session, see page 10.

**D3 The Métis Family Literacy Program**

Jennifer St. Germain

The Métis Family Literacy Program is a unique initiative designed to strengthen the literacy skills of Métis adults and youth, especially children. The intent of the program is to bring families and communities together in a supportive and culturally appropriate learning environment.

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is a province wide organization that strives to advance the interests and varied needs of Métis people. While education and skills development have always been a priority, this is the first time a focused approach has been taken toward increasing the literacy levels of Métis people. The MNO in partnership with Frontier College obtained funding from the Trillium Foundation to develop this innovative program. The program employs reading circles, reading tents, homework clubs, tutoring and mentorship, with culturally relevant resource materials, to create a love of reading and to empower families and communities.

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**D4 Community Partnership and Language Camp Initiatives with Seven Generations**

Gail Jones, Frances Boshkaykin

This workshop highlights the importance of education through the inclusion of Native language initiatives between Mine Centre Public School, Seine River First Nation and Nicickousemenecaning First Nation in the Fort Frances region.

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**D5 Partnership Building with Aboriginal Communities**

Darren McKee, Vice-Chief Lyle Whitefish

This presentation provides concrete, practical examples of partnership and collaboration in the education sector between First Nation and provincial jurisdictions. An overview of the relationship between Saskatchewan Learning and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) will be highlighted as well as the initiatives resulting from this relationship. Opportunities for dialogue and discussion will happen throughout, as well as handouts for participants.
D6  **School Success in Tyendinaga First Nation**  
*Kathleen Manderville*

This presentation will encompass the meshing of culture and curriculum, the learning environment of Quinte Mohawk School in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, and the efforts of staff to work in a professional learning community to develop community relationships, student success and cultural relevance in elementary school settings. The journey begins and continues as we move toward fully integrated cultural and curricular learning. The learning in community becomes valued by the learning in school.

D7  **Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools – A Guide For Staff**  
*Denise Baxter, Carolyn Chukra,*

Lakehead Public Schools is committed to improving and supporting Aboriginal student success by focusing on three priorities: 1) quality instruction and assessment 2) school climate and 3) parental engagement. The handbook entitled *Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools – A Guide for Staff* is intended to provide background information to staff and administrators on Aboriginal heritage and traditions, cultural teachings, celebrations, treaties, terminology, best practices and community linkages to Aboriginal community agencies. This knowledge will enhance Aboriginal cultural awareness, assist in delivering quality education, build a supportive school climate, meet the specific education needs of Aboriginal students, and nurture relationships between Lakehead Public Schools’ staff/administrators and Aboriginal parents/families and communities. The information presented in this handbook is based on research, consultation and literature.

Denise and Carolyn are here today to share with you the development of this initiative, along with some strategies that will support the achievement of Aboriginal students in Ontario.

D8  **School Success**  
*Repeat session  
*Barry M. Montour*

For description of this session, see page 11.

D9  **A Network of Care: Curve Lake First Nation**  
*Shelley Knott Fife*

A presentation on the “Network of Care” at Curve Lake First Nation will review the process of student support based on the importance of developing relationships that is in place for CLFN students from JK through to post-secondary studies. The discussion will review how in six years, the Education Department has used its extensive model of support to see a significant decrease in the secondary drop-out rate and impressive numbers of students going on to post-secondary studies.

D10  **School Success in Eabametoong**  
*Sharon Allen*

The Outdoor Education Program within our school was implemented in 2003/04. A brief outline of the program will be presented. The initial start up was funded through the New Paths Initiative. At first, the Outdoor Education Program began with only two weeks of cultural activities – one in the fall and one in the spring. Now the program is year round. The process will be explained, how the program started and how it has become a full-year program. You will hear about the difficulties and successes that we have experienced through the growth of this program and future goals and objectives. You will see a display of resources that have been developed as well as an outline of the curriculum. Photographs will also be shared of then and now.

D11  **Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Webcasts**  
*Repeat session  
*Pauline Beder*

For description of this session, see page 11.
Many First Nation, Métis and Inuit students receive significant amounts of their educational experiences in urban classrooms. To increase education outcomes for Aboriginal students, schools need to establish inclusive learning environments that address the needs of FNMI students. What factors are most important in creating these school climates? How can schools provide culturally relevant programming to engage Aboriginal learners?

Best practices, strategies and resources that are utilized effectively in some urban schools will be highlighted. Next steps that will improve educational opportunities for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students will be discussed.

During the past four years, Sioux Mountain Public School participated in the Ontario Ministry of Education Turn Around Teams Program. The school is comprised of over 300 students, 75 percent of whom are of Aboriginal ancestry. Sioux Mountain Public School models best practices in character education, special education, native language instruction, and literacy, including oral language. Student achievement in literacy and numeracy has improved significantly over the past four years, and is reflected by a large improvement in student EQAO scores in reading, writing and numeracy. Student achievement data is an integral component of our Professional Learning Community and is utilized to shape classroom instruction, including the implementation of effective intervention strategies for students. Over the past three years, Sioux Mountain Public School has developed an outstanding native language and cultural program. The Aboriginal language and cultural programs are supported and valued by the school staff, and are critical to the success of our students.

This workshop outlines the importance of oral language programming within the balanced literacy classroom and provides an overview of strategies and activities that promote oral language. Participants will have an opportunity to review and engage in a few activities to determine how oral language teaching strategies can be incorporated into literacy programming and across the curriculum.

The session will also include information on the vision, principles and conceptual framework of the renewed Action Plan 2007-2010.

For description of this session, see page 13.

The history of the Kwayciwin Education Resource Centre in Sioux Lookout and the Academic Readiness Project will be presented as well as the resources being produced by the Centre.

“Language is a gift from the Creator and must be maintained, respected and honoured throughout all our lives.”

The Centre has developed curriculum guidelines, a teaching model and resources for schools, offering an Anishshinimowin Immersion Program and for schools whose language of instruction is English.

The presenters will also show how academic skills and concepts are integrated into an Aboriginal culture and language program.
E7 School Success in Tyendinaga First Nation
Repeat session
Kathleen Manderville

For description of this session, see page 13.

E8 Effective Assessment and Evaluation Tools and Practices for Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students with Special Needs
Dr. Gaby van der Giessen, Dr. Cam Willett

For all learners, effective assessment and the tools for effective evaluation are tied to effective teaching strategies. In this presentation, we will examine supportive learning environments that emphasize active learning, meaningful educational material and the assessment and evaluation tools that complement teaching/learning.

A classroom designed to reflect a community of learners will meet the needs of each student where each participant may be an expert or a novice in a variety of activities; where positive reinforcement is emphasized over punishment; where a teacher believes that each child is capable of succeeding; where the teacher embraces diversity; and where the teacher communicates the idea that each learner is important.

For all learners, effective assessment must be tied to effective teaching strategies. In a successful, inclusive classroom, assessment is an ongoing process that guides teaching.

A general description of learner characteristics will be included.

E9 Affirming the Métis, Informing the Others: Métis Resources for the Elementary Classroom
Repeat session
Karon Shmon

For description of this session, see page 11.

E10 Learning Mathematics for Teaching
Kathryn Kubota-Zarivnij, Mary Lou Kestell

Effective mathematics learning environments are challenging, developmentally appropriate for all students, and strategically organized. What does such a program look like when it is designed for Aboriginal students?

Effective math programs include problem-solving-based mathematical tasks and lessons that engage students at their level of readiness and provoke them to develop conceptual understanding, to generate, select, and use appropriate procedures/algorithms, and problem-solving strategies, and to activate multiple representations of their mathematical thinking. How does this look in an Aboriginal context?

During this session, we will experience ways to learn mathematics for teaching, have interactive discussions, and represent our mathematical thinking through the use of multiple representations. We will explore answers to these questions and any that you bring along.

E11 Empowering Aboriginal Youth through Strength-Based School Programs
Debbie Chiodo, Robyn Turgeon, Janet Atone

The CAMH Centre for Prevention Science (CAMH CPS) has collaborated with school boards, community agencies and Aboriginal partners, educators, students and leaders to develop violence prevention projects involving Aboriginal Youth. The Fourth R Aboriginal Perspective is a culturally adapted curriculum resource which takes a rigorously evaluated health promotion curriculum and enhances it with features that are meaningful for Aboriginal Youth. A Peer Mentoring Program has been introduced in select London, Ontario schools where senior Aboriginal students mentor junior students. The success of this program has led to developing a “stacked” course where Aboriginal youth can obtain Ministry-approved credits as both protegés and mentors. A transition conference has been held for Grade 8 Aboriginal students that addresses the crucial transition phase from Grade 8 to Grade 9. Nationally, CAMH CPS works with agencies in Winnipeg, Vancouver and Bella Coola to adapt violence prevention programs for Aboriginal youth.
A First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Conference
November 26–28, 2007 – Toronto Marriott Eaton Centre