Partnerships
Joining Together To Create a Vision for Our Children

Goyce Kakegamic
Keewaytinook Okimakanak (Northern Chiefs Council)
Coming Through

• Despite Challenges in:
  o Inadequate funding
  o Lack of appropriate curriculum
  o Limited access to second level services
  o Few special education services
  o Crowded and unsafe school facilities

• Our people are succeeding as:
  o Teachers
  o Administrators
  o Engineers
  o Nurses
  o Pilots
  o Social profession workers
  o Etc.
Transition

- Transition from what – transition to what.
- Transitioning from the First Nation level to the Provincial Education System.
- Two dimensions of transition;
  - Social
  - Educational
Educational Challenges

• Proud First Nation grade eight graduate
  o Satisfactory grades
  o Confident
  o Look forward to continuing your education

• Reality
  o Literacy skills at low grade level
  o Not understanding what is being taught when a student enters the provincial system

• Under-funded and under supported system
  o Cannot meet achievement levels of the mainstream education systems
  o Undisputed fact
  o Challenges and the education gap continue to widen
Educational Challenges

- Educational Crisis
  - Many ways of manifesting itself
  - Without access to future education;
    - Students are giving up
    - Return to home communities

- Self-destructive behaviour
  - Suicide
    - 1986 to 2011; we have lost 437 of our sons and daughters
      - Many who have dropped out of school
      - Constant tragedy
  - Seven students lost by tragic circumstances
    - Three were K.O. students
    - Most recent: November 2011
Educational Challenges

- Lack of educational skills
- Social adjustments
- Failure of First Nation education systems
  - Students are NOT at fault
  - Educational system is failing our students
- Lack of support from Canada
- Where are our First Nations students going?
Education System

- Funding First Nation students but takes little responsibility for results
- Lack of meaningful First Nation cultural accommodation
- Tolerates, not welcomes First Nations students
- Facing education realities
Education System

• “First Nation education program is a non-system not designed to produce results”. Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Canada
  o Three years behind grade level
  o Drop out rates over four times the provincial norm
  o Lack of cultural & linguistic appropriate curriculum
  o Lack of second and third level services
Academic Assessment

- 2000 First Nation students
  - Reading comprehension
  - Spelling
  - Writing
  - Vocabulary
  - Computational and basic numeracy
- 95% of student tested in June were two or more grades behind their grade 8 placement
- Results
  - Reading Comprehension: Grade 5.2
  - Vocabulary Average: Grade 4.8
  - Computational Math Average: Grade 6.5
Academic Assessment

- September 2011
  - Special Education at Dennis Franklin Cromarty school assessed all grade nine students using the CAT4 assessment tool
  - Results:
    - Reading Average: Grade 4.9
    - Vocabulary Average: Grade 4.9
    - Writing Average: Grade 4.9
    - Spelling Average: Grade 7.4
    - Mathematics Average: Grade 5.3
    - Computation and Estimation: Grade 5.3

- Magnitude of educational gap is unacceptable
Transition

- Emotional transition
- Psycho-social transition
- Social Challenges
  - Worlds away
  - Young age to face freedom in an urban setting
  - Face social pressures without parental and community support
- Shifting focus
  - Emotional and social support
  - Drugs, alcohol and gangs
- We must design and implement these programs with our eyes open, facing the realities
Areas to focus on

- Education Support
- Parental Support
- Student Supervision
- Provincial School – First Nation Feeder Schools Strategy
- Transition Year Academic Program
- Student Accommodation
- Technological High School
- Reverse Tuition
- Aboriginal Elementary School
Our Responsibility

- Our students deserve a chance
- Increasing opportunities
- Meaningful employment

- We must equip our students
  - Too many are only qualified for entry level positions
- Changes will happen along with our education system
- Effectively meet the needs and aspirations of our students
Active Role

- Entitled to a quality education
- A safe, healthy and productive future
- Accept challenges
- Make our leaders realize the state of our education programs
- Adapting the curriculum and teaching methodologies
- Believe that education is a fundamental key
- Equipping our children
THANK YOU

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