LEARNING WITH THE MÉTIS COMMUNITY

Scott Carpenter
Circle of Light 2011
Introduction

• Who are the Métis in Ontario?
• Understanding the Métis Nation of Ontario and Community Councils
• MNO Education
• Ontario-Métis Specific Research
• Resources
• Moving Forward
Terminology

Aboriginal – General term describing:

1. First Nations/Indian/Native
   • Status & Non-Status
   • On & Off Reserve
2. Inuit/Eskimo
3. Métis/Half-Breed
Background Of The Métis
Prior to Canada’s crystallization as a nation-state in west central North American, the Métis people emerged with their own distinct identity, language (Michif), culture (i.e. song, dance, dress, national symbols, etc.), traditions and way of life.

This Métis collective identified as the ‘Métis Nation’ and were recognized as such by others. Throughout its history, the Métis Nation has stood up to defend its lands, rights, interests and way of life, as Canada has evolved as a country.
• Historic Métis communities emerged in what is now known as Ontario as part of the fur trade. These communities, and their present day continuations, are an indivisible part of the larger Métis Nation.

• Historic Ontario Métis settlements and communities were connected to each other, as well as, to the rest of the Métis Nation through a common culture, trade and commerce, the mobile lifestyle of the Metis, extensive kinship connections and seasonal rounds.
The Métis National Council ratified, in September 2003, the following definition of Métis:

“Métis” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of Historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.
Métis Identity

• Historic Rights Bearing Métis
  – Includes self I.D.
  – Collective rights

• Self –Identifying Métis
  May or may not have a connection to the historic rights bearing Métis community
Contemporary Confusion of the Term ‘Métis’

1. Term is used to describe two distinct groups.
   1. Historic Métis Nation
   2. All persons of mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry
2. In some cases, there were close geographic and kinship relationships between First Nations and Métis.
3. Changes to the term ‘Indian’ in the Indian Act (Bill C-31)
Clarifying the Term ‘Métis’

• The Métis people are not just mixed blooded individuals or First Nations people with or without “status” under the Indian Act.

  – Non-status First Nation & “Métis”

  – “Métis” & “métis”
Constitution Act, 1982: Part II

RIGHTS OF THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLES OF CANADA

35. (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

(2) In this Act, “aboriginal peoples of Canada” includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

...
### Section 35 Canadian Constitution: Non-Status First Nation & Métis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Inuit</th>
<th>Métis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Indian Act</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Non-Status</strong></td>
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The term "Métis" in s. 35 does not encompass all individuals with mixed Indian and European heritage; rather, it refers to distinctive peoples who, in addition to their mixed ancestry, developed their own customs, way of life, and recognizable group identity separate from their Indian or Inuit and European forebears. Métis communities evolved and flourished prior to the entrenchment of European control, when the influence of European settlers and political institutions became pre-eminent.
In *R v. Powley*, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that Métis communities in Ontario have constitutionally-protected Aboriginal rights throughout their traditional territories that flow from their special relationships to their lands.

Despite longstanding assertions and demands for negotiations, Métis communities in Ontario have largely been excluded from Treaty making (with the exception of the Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty #3). As such Métis land and resources rights in Ontario have not been extinguished.
Establishing A Métis Right - The Powley Test

• The Supreme Court said that the appropriate way to define Métis rights in s. 35 is to modify the test used to define the Aboriginal rights of Indians (the *Van der Peet* test). This Métis test will now be called the *Powley* test. The test is set out in ten parts.
The Métis Nation Of Ontario (MNO)

- In 1993, the MNO was established through the will of Métis people and Métis communities coming together throughout Ontario to create Métis-specific governance structures.

- In 2008, the MNO and the Ontario Government signed a Framework Agreement that recognizes the MNO’s representative role and committed to work together on rights and socio-economic issues facing Métis people.
Service To Métis Communities
MNO Delivery Structure
Chartered MNO Community Councils
According to the 2006 Census

- 73,605 Ontario residents self-identified as Métis compared to 48,340 in 2001.
- 21% of the Métis population was 15 years or younger.
- The MNO represents approximately 45,000-50,000 Métis people.

The Métis population in Ontario is young, growing and a significant Aboriginal community.
Canada
2006 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs) with a Métis Identity Population of 250 or more

Number of CMAs/CAs

- 2,000+: 24
- 1,000 to 1,999: 28
- 500 to 999: 18
- 250 to 499: 24

Aboriginal Peoples in the 2006 Census

- **Total Aboriginal Identity Population**: 1,172,785
- **Multiple Aboriginal Responses**: 7,740
- **Aboriginal Responses Not included Elsewhere**: 26,670
- **North American Indian Identity**: 698,025
- **Métis Identity**: 389,785
- **Inuit Identity**: 50,480

(100%)
Ontario Aboriginal Population, 2006

Métis Provincial Populations, 2006

Provinces:
- AB: 85,500
- ON: 73,605
- MB: 71,805
- BC: 59,445
- SK: 48,115
- NB: 27,980
- NS: 7,680
- NF & Lab: 6,470
- PE: 3,850
- YK: 805
- NWT: 130

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Ontario's First Nation, Métis & Inuit Student Populations K - 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nation students - provincially funded</td>
<td>11,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Métis students - provincially funded</td>
<td>27,770</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inuit students - provincially funded</td>
<td>1,265</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total FNMI students - Provincially funded</strong></td>
<td>40,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nation students - Tuition Agreements Elementary</td>
<td>2,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nation students - Tuition Agreements Secondary</td>
<td>2,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FN students - tuition agreements (Federal)</strong></td>
<td>5,212</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total FNMI Students in Elementary &amp; Secondary (ON)</strong></td>
<td>45,447</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>% of Metis Provincially Funded in Prov. Schools</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Metis in Provincial Schools including Tuition Agreements</td>
<td>61.1</td>
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Estimates are based on 2006 Census data.
Aboriginal High School Graduates, 2006

Percentage of young adults with less than a high school diploma, Ontario, 2006

A Métis Approach

- Dealing with the misconceptions
- Identity issues
- Language
- Connections to self, family, community, history
- Recognition
- Respect
- Life long learning
- Education through Experience
- Empowerment

“The destiny of a people is intricately bound to the way its children are educated. Education is the transmission of cultural DNA from one generation to the next.” (The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol 3 part 5 p. 1)
Early MNO & Métis Community Council Involvement in Education

- Labour Market Staff, Volunteers,

- *Participated in the development of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007*

- School Board Outreach (Manitoulin)

- Ontario College of Teachers Focus Groups
Métis Education Action Plan

The MNO Education Action Plan was created in 2008 which outlined priorities:

• Improve Métis student recruitment, retention and graduation.

• Improve Métis student well-being.

• Engage Community partners in process.
Education and Training Branch

K-12
  – Signed MOU with Ministry of Education (2009)

PSE
  – Signed MOU with Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2010)
  – *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, 2011*
  – MOUs with PSE institutions
  – Research Chair in Métis Studies, University of Ottawa

**Increased Education and Training Capacity within MNO**
  – hired Manager, Education (2008)
  – hired Education Officer (2010)
  – hired Postsecondary Education Analyst (2011)
K-12

• Work Plan
  – Education Kits production and distribution
  – Hiring of new Education Officer/Analyst
  – Joint training sessions with kits
  – Awareness raising (EO and LEADS meetings)
  – Community engagement
  – Research
  – Michif
Urban Aboriginal Education Pilot Project

- MNO Involvement at the Provincial level
- Mixed involvement at the local delivery sites
In 2011 two reports: Stonecircle and Anuiik and Bellehumeur-Kearns.

Both reports were based on literature review, interviews and survey.

Preliminary outcomes of the K-12 report:
- No specific literature on Métis education in Ontario.
- Less than half the boards responded to the survey.
- There are pockets of a lot of good work out there.
- Looking to 2016, Ministry will report on self identification data.
- Expanded use of Ontario Education Number (OES) system.
- Monitor the 2007 Framework and continue working on system wide improvements.
Postsecondary Achievement Statistics

• 51% of non-Aboriginal people attain postsecondary accreditation while only 35% of Aboriginal people graduate from postsecondary.

• While 23% of non-Aboriginal people had university degrees, only 9% of Métis people had graduated from university.
Financial Assistance for Métis in PSE

• Métis Bursary Program
• Aboriginal Scholarships and Bursaries
  • NAAF
  • FAAY
• Labour Market Programs
Employment & Training Programs and Services

• Wage Subsidy
• Summer Career Placement
• Culture-Based Development Grant
• Training Strategies
• Mobility Assistance
• Self-Employment

• Training Purchases
• Apprenticeship Support
• Employability Program
• Youth Programs
• Disabilities Support
• Job Creation Partnership
Métis Stay in School Program

- MSSP is aimed at providing Métis youth who are in school the encouragement and support to stay in school.
- To improve the future of Métis youth by encouraging implementation of activities aimed at keeping them in school and facilitating their transition from school to work.
- To provide opportunities for students to participate in after school activities to encourage them to be engaged in school life.
- To build student self esteem by removing barriers to them participating in cultural, school related recreational and other self fulfilling activities.
- The objective is to encourage the youth to stay in school in order to gain the knowledge and skills to make a place for themselves in the local labour market.
- To recognize the successful completion of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
Research Chair Métis Studies

- Signed September 30, 2008
- Raise awareness
- Ontario specific
- Partnership between MTCU, MAA, COU
- University of Ottawa selected to host
Research on Effective Practices to Support Métis Learners Achievement and Self-Identification Project

 Practices to support Métis postsecondary learners
- Access and Transition programs.
- Partnerships between Métis communities and institutions.
- Métis student supports.
- Community-based programs.

 How postsecondary institutions can support Métis learning
- Increase Métis faculty and staff.
- Pro-active Métis student recruitment programs.
- Relevant Transition/Bridging programs.
- Academic outreach/support programs.
- Métis Studies.
- Financial supports
- Cross-cultural awareness training for all faculty.

 New project: Faculties of Education in Ontario
Establish a community of Métis PSE learners at their institution.

Assist students to find appropriate support services.

Connect students and MNO Community Councils

Increase awareness of PSE funding and experiential learning opportunities.

Outreach to High Schools to encourage Métis students to consider PSE.
MNO Supportive Activities

- Moccasin Camps
- Curriculum development / review when possible
- Education Kits
- Material Culture Kits
Including Métis in Curriculum

- Need to develop separate Métis unit(s)!

- In the meantime, Métis history and culture can be included immediately in a variety of subjects!
Art
Fitness/ Physical Education
History

• What do you know about the Mica Bay incident?
Métis Education Kits
MNO Involvement in Resource Development

The MNO provided significant content to the new Aboriginal Peoples in Canada and Aboriginal Beliefs, Values, and Aspirations textbooks by Pearson Good Minds
Métis Resources - The Unwritten Chapters: Métis in Ontario

- Métis Community Councils have accessed cultural grants to publish local histories.
Métis Resources

- Gabriel Dumont Institute & Virtual Museum
- Pemmican Publications
- Good Minds
- Métis Resource Centre
- HBC Archives
Partnership Opportunities
With The MNO

- Presentations
- Resource development
- Aboriginal Committee & Council representation
- Internships
- MNO programs
- Inclusion in Cultural Activities (Riel Day)
Working with the MNO: What you need to know!

• Limited staffing – please be patient!
• MNO and Community Council involvement in the classroom is primarily volunteer based
• Métis Communities can vary greatly depending on their First Nations & European backgrounds and the paths they have followed.
• Dependent on the knowledge of individuals in the Métis Community
• If you don’t know, ask!
Moving Forward

How can School Boards, Schools and Teachers ensure that Ontario Métis specific information is included in the curriculum?

What was the Métis involvement in the War of 1812?

What do School Boards, Schools and Teachers need to know to work effectively with the Métis?
Métis Nation of Ontario
1-800-263-4889