Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher Toolkit

Aboriginal Education Office
Ministry of Education/Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Overview of Workshop

• Welcome and Introductions

• Aboriginal Education Office

• Aboriginal Education Strategy
  • Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework
  • Sound Foundations for the Road Ahead

• Curriculum Perspectives Resource Project
  • Expectation Sheets
  • Sample Strategies
  • Resource Booklet
Aboriginal Education Office

- Established in 2006.
- Provides ministry-wide coordination and leadership on Aboriginal education issues and initiatives.
- Works in collaboration with Aboriginal communities and organizations, Ontario school boards, post-secondary institutions, other ministries and the federal government.
Aboriginal Education Strategy

• The *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* is a key part of the strategy.

• The Framework includes approaches for schools and school boards that will:
  – boost Aboriginal student achievement,
  – help close the gap in achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, and;
  – increase public confidence in publicly funded education.
Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework

How the Framework will help make a difference:

• Improve students' literacy and numeracy skills.
• Train teachers in teaching methods that are appropriate for Aboriginal students.
• Encourage more parents to become involved in their children's education/school.
• Integrate First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories and perspectives throughout the Ontario curriculum.
• Increase knowledge and awareness among all students.
Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2011)

- In March 2011, the government released its plan for delivering high-quality postsecondary education and training to First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners in Ontario.

- Through the Framework implementation of the framework Ontario strives to:
  - Increase the number of Aboriginal learners that have the skills and formal education required to more actively participate in the labour market.
  - Support postsecondary education and training institutes are responsive to and respectful of the needs, choices and aspirations of Aboriginal learners.
  - Increase the number of Aboriginal learners achieving high levels of success in postsecondary education and training.
Sound Foundations for the Road Ahead


- Key findings of the report include:
  - Increased collaboration and communication between boards and FNMI communities
  - Growing awareness of the Framework and dedicated support for its implementation
  - Significant increase in the number of boards offering Native Language and Native Studies courses
Report Recommendations:

Two elements were identified as key to deepening the implementation of the Framework:

- Availability of resource materials that are contemporary and inclusive of First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives.

- Having a dedicated position or point person within a school or board to support the needs of FNMI students and teachers wanting help with program planning
  - To date 36 boards have created positions (principals, resources teachers and counsellors) with a dedicated focus on FNMI education.
Did you know…

• **There are more than 150 expectations in the Ontario elementary curriculum that help teachers bring First Nation, Métis and Inuit histories, cultures and perspectives into the classroom?**
What is happening?

• *As part of the curriculum review process, Aboriginal perspectives are being incorporated into the revised elementary and secondary curriculum.*
What does this mean for Aboriginal students?

• *For Aboriginal students, the revised curriculum will help foster a strong sense of identity and a positive self-image.*
What does this mean for all Ontario students?

• For all Ontario students, and educators, the revised expectations and opportunities add a rich, new dimension to Ontario’s curriculum, and strengthen opportunities to explore, appreciate, understand, and value the contributions of Aboriginal communities to the social and cultural fabric of our province.
Aboriginal Perspectives in the Curriculum Resource Project - Process

- Expectation sheets completed in Spring 2007.
- Planning for the writing team started in Spring 2007.
- Writers included principals, teachers and education consultants from both First Nation schools and schools in the provincial system.
What teachers can expect!

• A resource series consisting of
  ✓ Expectation Summary Sheets
  ✓ Elementary/Secondary Strategies
  ✓ Resource Booklet
  ✓ These are posted on the Ministry of Education website at:
    http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/toolkit.html
Expectation Summaries

• Each summary lists expectations in the revised Ontario curricula that provide opportunities to bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom.
• There are 8 elementary summaries (Grades 1 to 8) and 8 secondary summaries (8 courses), for 16 summaries total.
• The expectation summaries are intended for use by teachers as a reference, and in discussions with parents and students.
Strategies and Resource Booklets

1. Elementary teachers are provided strategies they can use to implement Aboriginal perspectives in the classroom.

2. The Resource Booklet will help teachers use the new resources. It outlines the organization of the Teacher’s Toolkit, the key features of the Toolkit’s resources and provides samples of the Toolkit’s contents.
Thank You!

Have questions or comments? Please let us know!

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